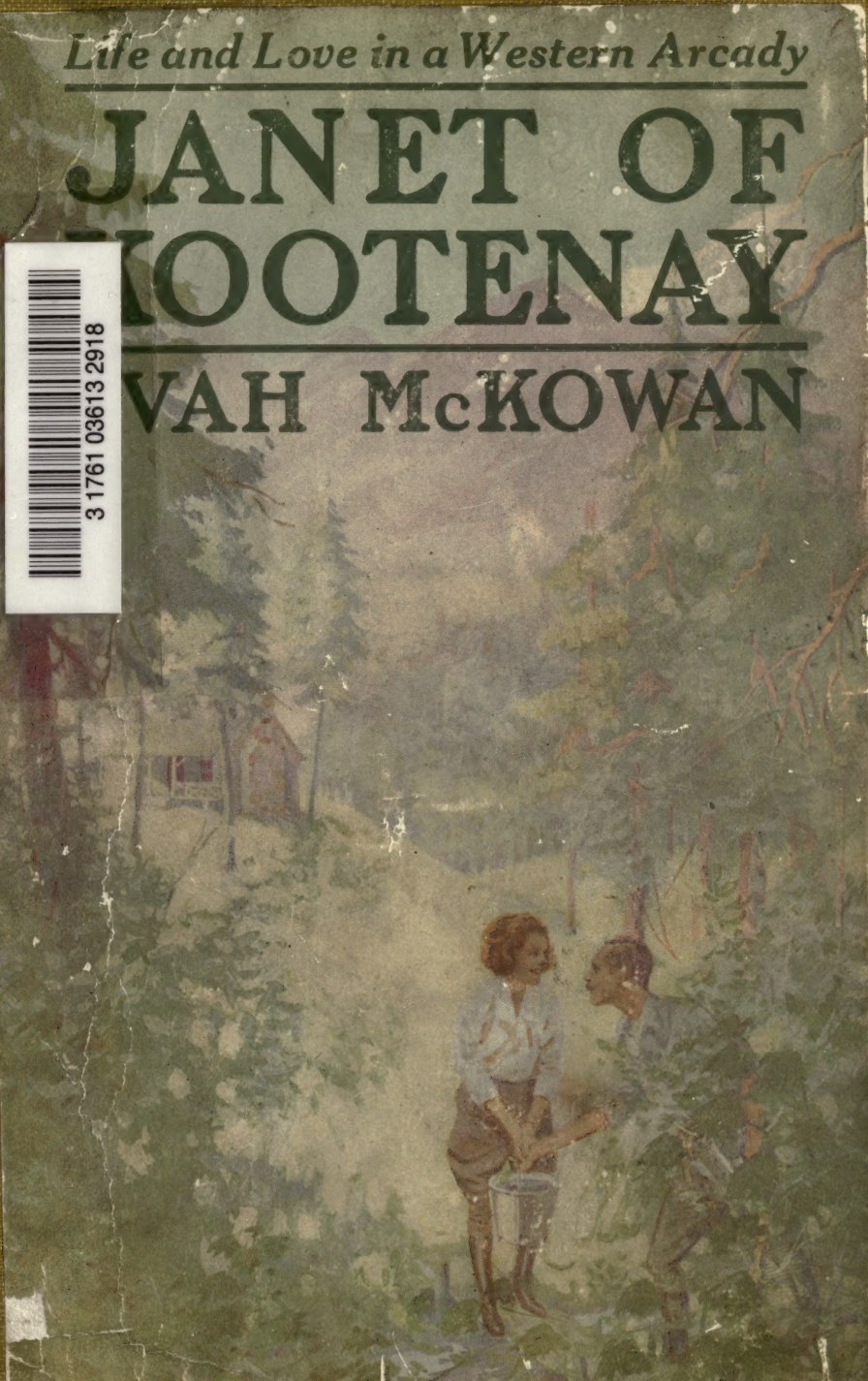
Life and Love in a Western Arcady

JANET OF KOOTENAY

VAH McKOWAN

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LIFE, LOVE, AND LAUGHTER
IN AN ARCADY OF THE WEST

BY

EVAH McKOWAN

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Kootenay Valley, March the first.

DEAR NAN:

Veni. Vidi. Purchaci.

My cherished dream is realised: I own a fruit farm. Not that you, whose rolling prairie wheat fields are practically bounded by the horizon, would be inclined to call the place that I have bought a farm at all. A beautiful bit of forest primeval would be more nearly your description of it, and, not having my robust imagination, you would never be able to visualise, as I do, the most wonderful garden spot ever devised by a home-hungry girl.

I loved British Columbia the minute I had crossed the divide. Crowning the summit, the peaks of Crow's Nest Mountain and the Three Sisters were lit with the dawn rays of a sun that would not be visible to me for another half hour.

As the train windows revealed an unfolding panorama of "Mountains high with lakes close by, and mighty forest trees," I knew why I had gotten

so restless on the ranch. I had been starved—just starved for scenery.

McGregor was awaiting me at the train. Two rather nice looking hotels were in sight and I inquired of him which would be my better choice. He at once advanced a number of reasons why I would not care to stop at either of them, and said that it was the invariable custom for a young woman to seek a private home.

Without more ado, he led me home to his wife, who was all ready for me. She furnished some objections to the hotels that he had missed, and added:

"Besides, my dear, they charge such outrageous prices. Three dollars a day! You'll like it so much better here and I can do it for two fifty a day as well as not."

You might mention that to Mrs. Gilpin at the Fort. She has been trying to get up the courage to put her rates up to one twenty-five a day for two years. However, I was thankful afterward to have been put on my guard by the opening number.

Having nothing to do that afternoon, a state quite common with him, I should imagine, McGregor offered to drive me round to see his "prospects." He got out and dusted up the grandiloquent air that he had used when British Columbia Farm lands were sold by the pound, with no price too high to ask.

He drove me first to a place with about forty acres of well grown trees. The place pleased me mightily as an orchard, but no one could possibly have evolved a home out of the big bare house that was set baldly on the crest of a hill, and McGregor seemed disinclined to knock off three thousand or so—he said the house had cost that—so that I could burn it down and build a home.

"What I want," I told him, "is a small and artistic house with vines and trees about."

I produced his advertisement with the picture of the small log house buried in vines, with rows of trees stretching into the dim distance.

"Oh, that," he said. "That place is not for sale."

"But the picture is here, and under it the words, 'farms for sale.' "

"Um, yes. Doubtless you *could* buy it if you had money enough. Forty or fifty thousand, say. But that picture is there merely to show what can be done with British Columbia soil. Understand?"

"But the advertisement doesn't *say* that."

He ignored this triviality.

"I've the selling of some mighty fine places," he said, "and if you'll just give me an idea of how much cash you got along——"

I grew wary at this and interrupted him:

"There is only one word in your prospectus that is responsible for my coming here, and that is this,

'bargains.' If you will show me first anything you have that you would put under that heading, I can decide at once and will likely be able to get back on to-morrow's train."

He sat up and pulled himself together. The prospect of losing a long wanted buyer and a well paying boarder at one fell swoop seemed to stir his latent common sense.

We looked at farms with young orchards and at farms with full bearing trees; some which had splendid water and some none. But always it seemed that, no matter how many the attractions, there would be something to bar them from being eligible. Usually it was the house.

"*Why,*" I asked him, "have they all cut down and destroyed enough logs to make an artistic home, in keeping with the surroundings, and then put up a frame house and painted it an atrocious colour? And why have they not left trees for shade and protection?"

Before he had discovered a suitable reason for all this we had turned a corner, and there, before my very eyes, was the house of my dreams. Built of logs it was, with a roof of shakes, and half hidden in a group of poplars that was a miniature park.

"Drive in," I commanded. "This is my home. I don't care what it costs."

"It's not for sale, Miss. Not at any price."

"Of course not," I said, despondently, "any one

with sense enough to build a place like that would have sense enough to keep it."

It was my disappointment in this matter that prepared me to consider his next idea.

"Tell you what," he said, "what you want is wild land. I've an eighty at the foot of Goat Mountain that would just suit you. It has trees of every sort and you could leave them standing where and how you like when you clear the land. It has a good mountain stream too. Between you and me, it's no good buying a place without good water."

"But," I demurred, "that all takes time, breaking wild land and growing orchard."

"Oh yes, some. But when it's done it's *your* home; not one built by *any one*. And you can clear up pretty fast—if you have the cash."

"Is it a bargain?" I asked. "And how about taxes on this sort of thing?"

This last was added to remind him that he was paying taxes on a great deal of property, and that it would be very nice to have this off his hands before the June payments fell due: not to mention having this money to pay them with. Wasn't that subtle! I believe that I would make an agent myself.

We inspected the eighty. Trees there were, as he said—in plenty. I wondered if it ever could be cleared. He explained that land that is fertile enough to grow mammoth trees, giant ferns and

brakes and a wild luxuriance of all undergrowth, is just as willing, when placed in harness, to grow superb fruit trees, raspberry canes and tomato vines.

"How much?" I asked when we came again to the place where his horse waited.

He lit his pipe for time to think.

"The time was, not so very long ago, when I wouldn't have taken two hundred an acre for this piece."

"Good-*night*!" I said, climbing into the buggy.

"Hold on! Peter Gordon, on the next place here offered me one hundred an acre over a year ago."

I sat down hard and tucked the robe about me.

"Make me an offer, then," he said.

Not for nothing had I been making every man on the train talk fruit farm. Most of the trainmen owned a bit of land themselves and their information had helped me a great deal.

"The back twenty is nothing but hillside pasture. That's worth twenty-five an acre."

"Forty."

"No. Twenty-five. That makes five hundred. For the remaining sixty I will pay fifty an acre. That makes three thousand. Thirty-five hundred altogether. Take it or leave it."

"Seventy-five straight is rock bottom," he remonstrated.

"Thirty-five hundred: cash."

"There isn't a better piece of black loam in the valley."

"Cash," I said.

"That four or five acres over by Gordon's fence that was cleared by a squatter once is worth a couple of hundred to any one."

"Thirty-five hundred."

"You are only a half-mile from a shipping siding."

"Cash." I noted that every time I said this word, his eyes would brighten involuntarily. Still.

"That stream there: Worth a cool thousand to any farm."

"Put it that way then. A cool thousand for the stream; twenty-five hundred for the land."

Turning his back to me and leaning on his horse he thought,—at such length and depth that I thought he must have fallen asleep. Once he glanced around carefully to see if there were any signs of relenting in my face. I saw to it that there were none. So, finally, with a wrench that was almost audible he came round to my point of view; lured there, I am sure, by the magic of the word "cash."

"When can you pay it?" he asked.

"As soon as you can get the bank open in the morning."

It will be useless for me to try to describe to you, as I would like to, my place or its surround-

ings. Those four years on the prairie must have dried up the fount of my exclamatory raptures, although I remember that you always managed to retain yours, and to use them often for sunsets, dawns and other times of excitement.

However, devoid of colouring, here is its geographical situation, as Miss Betts used to say.

It is one of a row of small farms, each of eighty acres or so, and, all but mine, all or partially cleared, that are backed up, like a row of parked automobiles, against the foot of Goat Mountain. These face, looking south, on the new National Automobile Highway between Halifax and Vancouver.

It is only an afternoon's ride to Ralph Connor's Black Rock; and the graveyard where the men, who died of typhoid in the construction camp, are buried, is only over a hill or two.

The great Kootenay flats, the reclamation of which we have heard talked of so often, are only three or four miles away, and the whole valley is like a huge bowl, the edges of which are serried ranks of blue hills, crowned with snow.

The land itself could be divided into four square blocks of twenty acres, each one back of the other. The front has a small knoll, on the top of which my house will stand. The second twenty is rather low and should make ideal celery ground, with its moist black earth. The third block, sloping upward again, was surely made for peach orchard

and kindred crops, and the back, as I said, is merely hillside pasture.

And there are neighbors, Nan; neighbors all about. Standing on my little knoll, I can count eight houses within the radius of a mile. You may indeed be able, from the top of your windmill, to declare yourself monarch of all you survey, but it will be of more comfort to me, when evening falls, to see the twinkling lights of co-monarchs all about.

The place immediately opposite mine is owned by a Mrs. and Mr. Good. That is the way McGregor said it. I said that I hoped I would like her. She looked a motherly soul from a distance —wore a sunbonnet and all that. He said he hoped that *she* would like *me*.

My neighbour on the left, as I look south, is a Captain Fenton, a returned soldier, away now recruiting. On the right is the Peter Gordon that McGregor mentioned. Both are bachelors.

I am sure of the possibilities of at least one neighbour—Goat Mountain. I am in love with it already and shall lose no time in getting to be on intimate terms with its trees and flowers, its little ravines and glades, even, I hope, its top.

And now I must post this and find out the quickest way to get my land cleared and ready for action. It seems a crime to mutilate it.

Your erstwhile discontented, but now animated and happy

JANET KIRK.

My dear Nan:

This is being written beneath my own vine and fig tree, or, to be more explicit, beneath my own cedar tree. The man who is to build my house has put a floor and part wall to my tent, also a window and door. So we are quite comfortable, Bingo and I. He contributes to my sense of security by sleeping on the mat inside the tent door. I have bought only a few absolute necessities for use till you send my things along.

Mrs. McGregor's regret at losing me was touching. I will not include Bingo in this as she thoroughly hated him. She said she had quite expected me to stay at least a month and had gone to considerable expense in the matter. What the expense had been she did not mention. Had I remained, I could have easily suggested more to her—a lamp for instance, for my room that would make a light.

She even offered to make it two dollars a day to help me out. I did not mention that it was the two fifty a day that had really helped me out.

I have selected the spot for my house. They will begin excavating the minute the frost is out of the ground—probably in a few days, if these sunny southern breezes continue. When a warm,

soft wind such as this blows over the Three Bar, it is a Chinook. Here, it is natural, early March weather, quite to be taken for granted.

The contractor has his tool shed up and, before commencing the house, is going to get the buildings ready for my venture into the realms of poultry. He will build four combination brooder and colony houses, the four to be set in a square for brooding and heated with burners from one gasoline tank. Later they will be set in a row and used as colony houses.

I have ordered one thousand baby chicks from Spokane, White Wyandottes. Will not these droves of snow-white fowl be artistic, roving through the orchards of "Arcady."

Yes, that is what I have named my place. Do you not think it a fitting one for the embodiment of my dreams of a pastoral life?

And oh, the plans I make for Arcady, here in the evenings by my student's lamp, with Bingo asleep at my feet—except when he gets up, boredly, to go for my wool ball that has rolled into an obscure corner—plans for my orchard, my garden, my house, my chickens, a dairy herd perhaps——

Speaking of plans, the only fixed one that I had before coming here was that my little home must be of logs—yes, certainly of logs, with vines all about. You cannot have forgotten all I had to say about that. Well, it turns out that a log

house, decently made, is an expensive affair, and that very special knowledge and skill is required in its making.

At least, such is the opinion of Mr. James, the only contractor in the valley. He refused, point-blank, to be bothered with one. However, he drove me to see a quaint little place he had just completed, sided up and down and topped with a roof of shakes.

"Could I have my house covered all over with the shakes?" I asked him.

"You could if you could get the shakes."

"How does one get shakes?"

Most people hereabouts have made their own. Cut them from blocks of cedar with a long knife struck with a hammer."

"Then, if that is all, I will have them."

Have you ever seen shakes, Nan? They are huge cedar shingles that weather, in time, to every beautiful shade of brown. I have decided to make my own, enough for the whole house.

To begin this I shall need my team, for the cedar blocks must be hauled from the river bottom. So, will you send along Molly and Dexter. I shall get the men busy on their stable at once.

Also there was a plow, harrow, cultivator and wheelbarrow—I have almost forgotten what all. Send me the old mower. The farmers here put up the wild hay that grows on the river flats for winter feed, and of course I must be in the swim.

You may send an extra plow, now that you are going into tractors, and I think that, with my bit of furniture, should almost fill the car.

Send the big blue davenport and charge it to your next payment. It never fitted your room anyhow; I shall build mind around it. I hope all this will not trouble you too much. Just remember that there is a Christmas turkey in it, also strawberries, tomatoes and such things all down through the years.

I have seen the manager of the Canyon Mills about buying my timber. He was glad to get it and will put men at cutting it this week. I impressed on him the necessity of haste. The timber is to be exchanged for lumber for the house and barn, which seems like money from home.

Very much love, also thanks from

JANET.

Arcady, March 15th.

DEAR NAN:

Here arrives another Sunday Budget. You may expect one each week, posted Monday mornings. I shall be too busy to write week days, if all I gather of market garden work is true.

To-day has been most exciting. Have met two of my neighbours. I begun the day by washing my hair—not a minute before it needed it. Then I was busy making Bingo miserable for company by scrubbing him when a knock came at the tent door.

"Why, my neighbour," I exclaimed. "Won't you come in?"

But Mrs. Good, her eyes accusing, was staring in stupefaction at my costume.

"Yes, Nan, I am doing what I had threatened—dressing for my work. Overalls I don't like, so I simply wear my riding breeches and leggings and a leather-trimmed khaki blouse.

Personally, I think it both sensible and becoming, but my visitor seemed to be simply bereft of breath by the brazenness of it all.

"Then, is there something I can do for you?" I asked.

Then she found her voice.

"I *was* going to ask you to go in to church with me."

Her frigid tone said plainly that no female who shamelessly answered her door without a skirt would get an invitation of any kind from her.

"But," she went on, "as I see you're busy, I'll merely say good-morning."

Down through the trees she marched, her back radiating self-righteousness. She gave vent to her outraged propriety and to her especial brand of Christianity by hitting her patient old horse smartly with the whip.

Well, it had to come, I suppose. I intend to do a man's work on my farm; I intend to dress so that I can do it and I cannot see how I can be hidden, camouflaged or smoke-screened from the gaze of sensitive-souled neighbours all the time.

Only this, Nan: put not your trust in sunbonnets. They may conceal any kind of a face. One by one our young illusions vanish.

Then, with my hair still blowing, I went to the spring for water. The "spring" is really a sand-bottomed well, scooped out where the stream drops over a log, right on the border between Captain Fenton's place and mine. The poplars and balm of gilead will soon be adding their fragrance to that of the woodsy moss about the spring. With only a little effort of my imagination I get the odor of violets and mayflowers.

Just as I dipped in my pail, a lazy English voice

so startled me that I almost let the thing float down the stream.

"I say, are my eyes playing tricks with me?" it said.

I looked all about but could see no one.

"I wonder about my ears?" I mused.

Then the owner of the voice made himself visible. A cane hung on his arm and he was putting in his pocket a book that he had been reading in the warm sun as he sat on a log.

"Your ears are excellent, it would seem, Miss Wood-nymph."

" 'Miss Kirk' would be more accurate, not to say suitable," I said.

"And my name is Fenton. I am your neighbour."

"I know," I said. "I didn't know you were back, but I know all about you. Mrs. McGregor told me about my neighbours."

"All of us?"

"No, you and Peter. She left me unprepared for Mrs. Good."

"But you are prepared for Peter and me?"

"Oh, yes. Peter is afraid of women. Afraid some siren will ensnare him sometime.'

"Ha! And Fenton?"

"Oh, he was a reservist and rushed home at the beginning of the war. He won a D.S.O. at the Marne."

"He doesn't sound to be so profoundly inter-

esting as the other. But he is interested. He admires your pluck in tackling a farm alone, also your good sense in the costume you wear.

"All my neighbours do not."

He glanced with amusement in the direction of Goods'.

"More than likely not. But then, the road of progress is always blocked with well-meaning people, valiantly trying to uphold old traditions."

Just here the Captain's mount, a big and shiny black beast with a smartly cropped mane, came to the stream for water. He was duly presented to me as "Midnight." Disdaining the introduction, he sniffed inquiringly about the pockets of his master's worn but well-fitting tweeds.

"No sugar lumps, Midnight. Highly unpatriotic these days. Ask the lady if she would like to ride you sometimes."

"She would, indeed," the lady replied.

He inquired if I had met Peter. I said I had not, and asked him to even matters up by telling the man that I was a man-hater of the most virulent type.

"Young woman," he inquired sternly, "are you asking a British officer to tell a lie?"

"Umm-m, we-ell——"

"Oh! Then that's all right. And doubtless the statement will be more than welcome, allaying apprehensions and all that."

Before we parted he offered to help me at any

points where the intricacies of gardening proved to be too much for me.

I noticed that, as he led Midnight back to his stable, he used his cane and was quite lame, almost as though he might wear an artificial limb. I wonder.

Arcady has fairly hummed with activity during the last week. The bushmen have felled several of the trees. It is fascinating to see the tall green monarchs sway a moment then come crashing to the earth. Especially so to Bingo. I have to hold him every time or his fine calculations would place him in the exact spot where the trunk falls heaviest. The fragrance stirred up by the falling spruce and fir is so evergreeny and Christmasy.

Mr. James has the barn well along. He is rushing things as it is easier to get the needed men before they must commence work on their own land. Am hoping that Dexter and Molly will arrive in a day or so.

The only other thing that I can think of is the purchase of a cow and calf. Remembering the one we bought in Fort Weyne, I was determined that this cow, whatever she cost, should have no faults.

With this in mind, I went to Worth's—I bought her of a very eloquent Mr. Worth—and escorted the boy who was sent to bring her home. She came willingly on being called. That was unlike our Minerva. She stood quietly while being

milked, although I walked about her constantly and allowed Bingo to do so too. This had always driven Minerva into fits. Then I milked a while and she is easy to milk. Mr. Worth showed me that she had filled a twelve quart pail to the brim.

I marvelled a bit that a pail that I have that is exactly the same size only holds eight quarts, but that discrepancy of course was not Betsy's.

So I bought her; seventy dollars.

Can one get a Jersey cow, a good milker, with all those virtues and a calf for seventy dollars?

I really seem to have.

The calf has been named William. This will indicate to you that it will not grow up to join the dairy herd that I sometimes dream of. However, William may pasture about here till he grows up from untimely veal into patriotic beef.

Your friend,
and also that of the food controller,
JANET K.

Arcady, March the twenty-second.

DEAREST NAN:

Your letter came last night, otherwise these budgets had been suspended.

I note that my accounts of my new surroundings have not moved you to the slightest envy; that you still think it the height of human bliss to ride out and out in the crisp morning air across the level prairie to meet the sunrise. Fancy one's riding to meet a sun that comes up in the prosaic way that it does about Fort Weyne! You should see the sunrise here in the mountains!

Sometimes when, in half-awake forgetfulness of where I am, I glance from my window to see whether the prairie dawn has decided to be blue-gray-pink or yellow-gold, my breath is almost taken by the sight of the hills and clouds all sifted through with wonder colours. The hilltops looking my way are frowning purple; the facets to the south-east, smiling gold.

My own personal sunbeams are, at this moment, stealthily climbing up behind the Canyon hill. Then, all of a sudden, they are over on the top of Goat Mountain, crowning it with opal and dispelling its white-cloud night-cap. This done, they move joyfully down to spend the day with me.

We unloaded the car Wednesday. Molly and Dexter were glad to touch *terra firma* and seemed pleased to see me. Bingo was so delighted to be with them again that he wanted to sleep in the stable to-night. Everything came through in ship-shape. The furniture reposes in the hayloft for the present.

A teamless neighbour is using Molly and Dexter to bring up cedar blocks for himself and me. I find that it is a good idea for a woman to own horses and machinery as she can often trade their use for work that she cannot do. The amount of trading that is done in a community where neighbours are plentiful and money scarce is amazing.

An old man near here, whose name and nationality is Saundy MacPhaill, came and offered to milk and care for Betsy for a quart of milk, night and morning. I concealed my elation as best I could while making the bargain.

The excavating of my cellar is finished. They did not find a single stone. To-morrow they commence the cement walls. The floor will be of cement too. It requires the very best to winter the fruits and vegetables properly, but the spring high prices make the effort and expense worth while.

Trees have been falling continuously. The knoll seems rather naked with them all lying low. I tied a white string about the trunks of those I wished left standing for shade and protection.

In front of the house-to-be are four big cedars. They make a very ornamental tree, and grow densely bushy if the tip is cut to prevent their growing higher.

I climbed and cut the first one myself but found it a pretty shaky and breath-taking job so I persuaded Chow, a Chinaman I have engaged for the summer, to climb the second. He pronounced that as "enough for one day" with much finality. Even my offer of an extra dollar did not move him.

A youth cutting logs near at hand, seeing the dollar, came and earned it—and he said he had earned it—by beheading number three. No fresh material being at hand, number four still brazenly flaunts its graceful tip skyward.

The first valiant knight that manifests a desire to win my maidenly favour by performing some feat of gallantry will be set at that stunt. Oddly enough, a woman farmer of twenty-eight, who has been a teacher, a reporter and a homesteader—all three states very hard on the coy-maiden-with-drooping-eyes attitude—is not usually pestered with sighing swains dying to do her favours.

When it comes to inspiring deeds of manly valour, the kind of girl who will stand all night in a line in front of the pre-emption office in below-zero weather, as you and I did, is not "in it" with a curly-headed, bright-complexioned young woman whose sole asset is tangley eyelashes.

But to return to Arcady—and no matter how scarce the valour-doers, I shall always have Arcady—at the west of the house I have left a few poplars that seemed to await a house to shelter. Also, on the east side the path that goes down to the little spring will go through a grove of young poplars, even though the men assure me that it should be cleared and dug for celery there. Celery on each side of this grove there may be, but it must not interfere with my trees.

Back at the west side again, just beyond the poplars I will have a tennis court. This, much against the heaps of advice that seems to pour in from all sides. Taking perfectly good soil and making it unproductive forever seems to most of the men to be the height of folly.

Some of the women have told me how much I shall appreciate the shade of my trees on the hot summer days, and say how nice it must be to be able to take as much soil as I like for a rose garden, but a number of the men seem to doubt my fitness to own such precious land at all.

However, I bought this place so as to have a spot where I can do *exactly as I like,* and it seems somehow to heighten the pleasure of doing so when some one else does not like it.

Then, right at my front fence, are two giant poplars, just the distance of a roadway apart, that are to stand as sentinels for Arcady. In order to have these at the gate, the drive will have

to be curved and cross the stream, but that allows for a rustic bridge, and so on.

I have gotten to be quite expert at making shakes. I got up to two thousand this last week. Captain Fenton helped me one afternoon. I made tea over the spirit lamp on a cedar block and it was really more like a picnic.

On another afternoon, when he saw me starting out to walk to town, he insisted that I ride Midnight. What a ride it was—almost like sailing in its smoothness. Midnight canters even more easily than your Norvell—distance has lent me daring—and how I did hate to bring the beauty in and turn him over to his owner. I was cordially invited to use him at any time, and accepted with keen delight. But——

When the Captain had led Midnight off I felt so much at peace with all the world that I decided to make advances to Mrs. Good while still under the benign influences of the ride. I really wanted her to like me and I wanted to like her.

In deference to her prejudices I wore a skirt, and, forgetting that I made the best bread in our cooking class, I went over and asked her advice about the subject. Only the other day I had read that the surest way to a woman's esteem is to ask her advice.

But in this case it did not work a bit. I see that it will take more than bread and occasional skirts to conciliate her.

She said she had seen me on the Captain's horse; that she hoped I would not get talked about but it was hardly delicate, was it? for a young girl, that was, an unmarried girl, to use a man's—an unmarried man's—property as though it were her own.

The only reply that occurred to me at the moment was to ask why her son had not enlisted, and as things seldom go from bad to better I got away as soon as possible.

Down their front path I met Mr. Good. Suddenly I felt perverse enough to try my original scheme on him. I asked his advice about gates, chimneys, nursery stock and many other things. Here, the experiment was more successful, much. I really must write to that magazine and put them right in the matter. Mr. Good followed me right to the road and I let him advise me for fifteen minutes for the benefit of the look-out station behind the geraniums.

Still, I am rather sorry now. I have decided to persevere until I have made a friendly and respectful neighbour of her, and I realise that a very bad beginning has been made.

I smile as I recall that Mr. Good is going to speak to "Charity" about having me over for Sunday supper some night. I fancy that "Charity" will do some speaking too when that time comes.

Do you get the name? Charity Good! Some-

what the same anomaly as that of the coloured girl I knew called Lily Snowdrop.

Enclosed is a ground plan of Arcady

From your own

JAN.

Arcady, March 29.

DEAR OLD NAN:

Two thousand shakes this week; again with some assistance, although I explained that it was sure to be indelicate from the point of view across the road.

Have given a man the job of putting a wire fence around Arcady. That is, across the front and back. Then, I believe that it is up to me to pay half of the cost of Peter's and Captain Fenton's line fence also.

Oh yes, indeed; I remember perfectly that I had said that I would never have a wire fence on any place of mine. But I have discovered that wire is quite the cheapest and most practical fencing, so am having it—with the mitigating circumstances of rustic posts and top rails. Just inside, a Carraganda hedge will be planted, all across the front. Carraganda grows rapidly and rankly here. The fence will soon be covered.

While the fence man and I were laying the line, we noticed that we were followed by a small boy who seemed to be animated with a lively interest in all our doings. More than once before had I seen this same small boy observing the progress of Arcady from the road, or from nearby tree-tops.

"What is your name, son?" I asked.

"Nicholas Albert Worth."

"My word! Who calls you that?"

"Mother, sometimes. When I don't come first time. Rest o' the time I'm Nicky. You making a fence?"

"Yes."

"Goin' to dig postholes soon?"

"Yes."

"Can I have the lend of the fish-worms?"

"Certainly. But you can't fish till May."

"Oh well, I'll have 'em ready. Whyn't you cut the tip off that other cedar?"

"Nicholas Worth, is it true that you can ask more questions than any other person in the valley? I've heard so."

Nicholas grinned. "Yes, I guess so. Who told you? A little bird?"

Here, Nicholas reading aright my intention of leaving the fence man and him to their own devices, dug his toe into the soft spring earth and said, almost desperately:

"My mother won't ever let me go onto any one's place without being invited."

"Do you want to come with me?"

"You bet."

Trotting by my side, he endeavoured to get the thing straight for home consumption.

"You did invite me, didn't you? I was standing right by that tree and you asked me in."

"Yes, I did."

"Sometimes my mother phones. Will you tell her you did?"

"I haven't a phone yet, Nicky."

"That's good. Didn't you drive past our house yesterday?"

"Yes."

"With a big box on the waggon?"

"Yes."

"The box was all covered up with blankets. Was that so no one could see what was in it? Mother thought it must be."

"You don't take your curiosity off the wind, do you, Nicky? No, it wasn't so no one could see it."

"Was it to keep the dust out?"

"I saw no dust."

"Was it to keep the *mud* out?"

"No."

Nicky thought for several minutes, then, gazing judicially at the top of Goat Mountain,—

"If I knew what was in the inside of that box, I wouldn't ever tell a single soul. Cross my heart."

"Do you *really* want to know, Nicky?"

"Gosh, yes. Mother don't let me say that but —what was it?"

"The crate was full of baby chickens from Spokane."

"*Was it?* How many?"

"A whole thousand."

"Gee! They'll all die."

"Oh, I do hope not, Nicky. Why do you say so?"

" 'Cause mother's did. And Mrs. Perry's, pretty near all. Mother says you can't raise chickens 'cept by settin' hens. Whyn't you ask my mother?"

"I didn't think of it, Nicky. But I think mine will live. You see, I paid thirty-five cents each for two-week-old chicks instead of twenty-five for two-day-olds."

"Thirty-five cents each for a whole thousand! Gee, that's a lot. Almost a hundred dollars, I guess. Will you make any money?"

"Not if they all die."

"P'raps they won't all. Maybe just some. Any dead yet?"

"No."

"Er any sick?"

"A few felt a bit dumpy when we put them in the brooders, but I think they'll be all right. Do you want to see them?"

"You bet. Then can I see your horses and pet your dog?"

"You can ask questions about them another day. Just a peep at my chickens now, then a cooky and off you go."

He was almost as enthusiastic as I about the moving masses of fluffy yellow white balls. We

inspected the thermometers in the four brooders and I let him watch me give them their rations of dry mash and skim milk. They are fed every four hours, in small amounts so that they will not overeat.

When Nicky was finally in possession of his cooky, he still seemed loth to leave. Something was on his mind.

"I crossed my heart, didn't I?" he said at last.

"Bless your heart, I don't care whom you tell about my chicks."

He waited for no more, but hurried on flying feet to the merciful task of allaying home curiosity.

Thursday, Captain Fenton came and asked me to come to see his greenhouses. He has two quite big ones; goes after it very scientifically.

I didn't know what to say.

"Mrs. Grundy has gone to town and won't be back till eight o'clock," he said, "if you are thinking of her."

So I went. Nan, if you could only have seen his spring bulbs! Tulips, narcissi, hyacinths and daffodils—a pastel colour-riot! The fragrance still hangs in my clothes.

He ships a huge crate of these every day. Also he has thousands on thousands of tomato plants, cabbage, cauliflower, head-lettuce and corn ready for the first transplanting. This must be a tremendous job and I would have loved to offer to

help as nothing appeals to me like fussing with young growing things, but——. Having encountered already the eyes of curiosity (Mrs. Worth), suspicion (Peter), and censure (Mrs. Good), I thought it best to mind my step.

The Captain told me that Saundy usually helps him, had cared for it during his absence at the war and again when he was away recruiting. Just then Saundy arrived, as angels do when spoken of, and our host made tea in his den at one end of the greenhouses. This den is typical of the cultivated tastes of its owner. There were a few sketches, exquisite portrayals of lights and shades; many worn and interesting books and a lamp and some bits of oriental pottery that looked as though they might be almost priceless. Together with these were bear skins and goat heads, relics of his more recent life in Canada. If one could only make him talk about himself!

However, Saundy talked lots. I liked the old Scotchman immensely. It was a very jolly party —and tea! The Captain can certainly make tea. It was some Oolong blend, of a fragrance that beggars description.

When Saundy had gone, my neighbour got me an exquisite pot of hyacinths, a book on hotbed culture together with a timetable for the planting of the various crops, and walked home with me.

The conversation touching once on Peter, I

asked if he had been told that our neighbourly regard was mutual. It seems he had.

"But I am afraid that he still remains to be convinced."

"What did he say, exactly," I asked.

"He said, 'time will tell, time will tell.' "

"I shall see that it does then," I said. "Did he tell you to beware?"

Caught suddenly, he only laughed.

"I shall have to allay his fears on that score too, then."

"No, I did that. Told him that matrimonial designs on the part of young women is one of the things a remnant soldier is exempt from. However," he went on, "there is one thing that is not barred him, and he needs them more than ever. That is friends. I am so glad to have found a good one in you. I'll come to-morrow and show Chow about the hotbeds."

Later, in the night, his words "matrimonial designs on the part of young women" came back to me and drove away sleep. Had he acquired the same idea that Peter was credited with—that I was on the ranch with the idea of securing a homemaker from somewhere in the neighbourhood?

I alternated between fits of fury at his telling me that there was no use in having designs on a remnant soldier—although he had not really said that, and certainty that he was too well-bred to harbour such a thought.

At times I thought of getting up and writing to Lester Owen that he might send along that solitaire, that he says is all ready to mail when a fruit farm falls through, but a latent decency reminded me that an engagement ring should have perquisites other than those of removing suspicions of my motives.

However, I decided that in future I would be well on the safe side. After a careful study of the hotbed instructions, I had Chow understandingly busy at them, when, fairly early the next morning, Captain Fenton came over.

"Eh, what?" he said in some surprise.

"The book you so kindly loaned me is very lucid, so I find I needn't trouble you at all."

"Ah!"

Have you ever noticed that that one small word can contain whole paragraphs at times? And, somehow, after he had gone I didn't feel the satisfaction I had expected to at all.

Soon after noon he saw me getting water and came to the spring, a determination in his face that there was no escaping.

"There was some reason for your manner this morning," he said quietly. "Don't you think I have a right to ask what it was?"

Sidestepping seemed to be out of the question so I faced him.

"You think exactly as Peter does."

For a long moment he looked at me in absolute

stupefaction, then when he had grasped my meaning he walked across the log bridge and came close to me in a manner that positively bordered on ferocity.

"You—provoking—little——"

What I was I shall never find out, for at this moment my faithful Bingo attempted to forestall any bodily harm to me by slipping round and nipping my supposed antagonist in the heel—his lame heel. You remember how he always flew at you the moment you seemed to be getting the best of a wrestling match or scrap.

"Even if you don't beat that infernal beast, which I think you should do," he said in some heat, "you might at least look sorry."

"But how can I? You must remember that Bingo is my sole defender. If you treat me with a proper respect, you and he will be friends. Besides,—I thought you wore an artificial limb—I'm glad to know that you do not."

"I'm sorry not to share your joy in either case."

"Not——?"

"Not," he interrupted me. "My knee will never bend again. So I can never again pick my strawberries, scrub my floors or say my prayers. A wooden leg nowadays can do all sorts of tricks. But never mind that. About this other. Where under heaven did you get such a notion? What have I said—or done?"

"You——"

Really, my reasons, when summoned before those disconcerting eyes seemed extraordinarily banal. As I remained silent, he went on.

"Why, I've thought of you as some modern goddess of youth, health and courage. It can't be that I have given any reason for your thinking me a bounder like that."

"But," I objected, "Peter is not considered a bounder; merely a man of perspicacity."

"Never mind Peter. If you will not tell me what I have done, then perhaps you will tell me what I can do."

"You can forgive me, if you will. I'm thoroughly ashamed. And I would like very much to be your friend."

He took my proffered hand in both his, and Bingo jumped about to show that his absolution had been granted.

In a day or two you will receive a pot each of daffodils, tulips and hyacinths; Captain Fenton's own idea. Next year I intend to have a greenhouse, but one cannot do everything first year. But I have three hotbeds. One for flowers; the others for lettuce, cress, radishes and onions for table use. My garden stock I shall buy from my neighbour's greenhouse this year.

Bingo sends gilt-edged regards

JANET KIRK.

Arcady, April 5th.

DEAR NAN:

My logs are gone. There seemed to be piles of them everywhere and I thought it would take weeks to move them, but they sent a big tractor; three days it came, two trips a day, four loads a trip, and all were gone.

I kept a big pile of the small logs, on the back forty, and in the winter shall have a machine come and cut them into wood. It is the thing to do here.

A gang commenced clearing Thursday. I gave a man the contract of clearing and plowing the front forty,—to be finished by the first of May. He gets forty dollars an acre. They are slashing the underbrush and piling for burning. Then there are stumps to be blasted. It will probably be lively about here for a while.

This morning I had the pleasure of another visit from Nicky. He came at nine o'clock, just as I was at breakfast.

"You asked me back, didn't you?" he asked almost before I had the door open.

"I'm glad to see you, Nicky."

"Mother says I can stay while she gets ready for church, if I don't get into a single bit of dirt. I'm a bother round home when I get dressed up. What you doing?"

"How did you know that I wouldn't be getting ready for church too?"

" 'Cause you don't go."

"To church?"

"Naw. And I wish I was a lady farmer so I could do as I like."

"But I do go to church."

"Here?"

"Perhaps not here yet. I've only been here a few weeks and the mud makes walking hard. I haven't a horse like your mother for driving in to church."

"Did you go where you were before?"

"Yes. We went to the schoolhouse on Tuesday evenings, and sometimes some of the neighbours drove us to town in their cars on Sunday evenings."

"Did you have neighbours that was bachelors there?"

"There were some. Why?"

"Then why did you move here?"

"You didn't think it was because the neighbours were bachelors, Nicky?"

"Um-hum. Sure. Or else you'd have bought a cleared place somewhere."

So, that is what they think; for assuredly that small boy had not been the originator of that idea. But that information was extra—not at all what Nicky had really come to tell me.

After we had fed the chickens, he led me with

great secrecy to the "sumpin'" that he wanted to show me. We skirted round the cleared place in deference to Nicky's Sunday boots, and not till we were close by Peter's fence did he pause.

"There," he said. "Did you know you had them?"

After a search among the tangle of neglected grass I discovered that what I "had" was four quite long rows of strawberry plants. It looked as though they had strayed through the fence from Peters big patch, but Nicky explained that they had been planted by the man who had built the shack.

I think that my delight at finding them must have satisfied even Nicky. I expect the plants are old and will need coddling, but fancy my having fruit of my very own this year!

Here an unmistakable whistle summoned Nicky, so he hustled off, leaving me with sufficient material for a Sunday morning's contemplation.

A nurseryman called about trees yesterday. Mr. Good had sent him. He made a plan of my land, with the distances apart and all that, for planting, also with the best spots for each variety marked. He had the most gorgeous pictures of fruit which he says cannot nearly do justice to what will grow in Arcady.

I gave him an order which includes, beside every variety of apple, peaches, pears, grapes, cherries, plums, raspberries, currants, and straw-

berries, also some Virginia creeper and Dutchman's Pipe vines.

Ornamental trees I do not need. He complimented me on my sense in keeping such a good selection.

I saw Captain Fenton at the well to-day. He says he gets frighfully thirsty some days, waiting to get his water till he sees me getting mine.

We talked of Albermarle—that is the name of his place—and Arcady. I noticed a slight frown of worry in his eyes as I waxed eloquent over my plans for my place. Several times I have caught the expression and wondered, so this time I asked outright.

"Why should I look worried over your exploits?" he countered.

"That is what I am asking *you.*"

"Then," he said, after studying my face uncertainly for a moment, "I'll tell you. I've been wondering if you realised how much all this is costing you."

"Let's see," I said; "about forty a day for clearing. Twenty or more a day for building; two twenty-five a day for the Chinaman; something like two to feed those greedy chickens, and a few more for horses, cow, Bingo, incidentals and myself. And I spent two hundred fifty on trees to-day."

"Oh well, then. As long as you know. I thought—you know it mounts up horribly—that

you might think this the same as a prairie proposition. And I've wondered—if you get in a tight hole—I've a bit I am not using—would you think——"

"You are very good," I said, "but, thanks to a timely railroad in Saskatchewan, and four good crops there, I am on easy street—that is, if this does not keep up too long. But I am not urging other girls to try it as I had intended doing. How would a girl with small capital, as I had when I went to the prairie, do here? There are other women farmers round here; how do they do it?"

"Let's see. Mrs. Crofts, the widow, used her husband's life insurance. Two ex-teachers over on Elm Creek insured their own lives and borrowed on that. Miss Ladds and Miss DeForest are business women of some kind and only spend the summer here. Some have not confided their schemes in me but doubtless they have them. I think most women buy a cleared place and make payments, but at any rate, few of them storm at it in the way that you do. Forty acres cleared the first year is breaking the record."

Do you listen to that, Nan! Instead of making a failure of fruit farming as you and Lester so glibly prophesied, I am breaking the record in the first lap.

I am glad to know that my making shakes impressed you all properly. They went a little

slower this week for I am off on another tangent. This time it is a stone gateway.

Those two regal cottonwoods—their shape is much like Ontario elms—seem to demand stone gateposts to uphold their dignity. So I, me myself, am going to make these gateposts. On the back twenty there is plenty of stone, a nice flat shale that builds beautifully.

I acquired a mixing box and some cement from the men who are building the cellar.

Saundy, who at times is a prospector, lent me his drilling irons and showed me how to drill holes in the big rock on the back corner.

Reluctantly the stumping men let me have a stick of dynamite—giant, they call it—and a piece of fuse from the supply they have on hand for stumping.

I knew as I proceeded about the business, that every man on the place was covertly watching me, so I summoned all the nonchalance at my command as I laid the fuses and prepared to light them. Every man, I felt sure, expected me to end by calling on his superior masculine aid—and how I would love to have done so—but I felt that it was up to me to demonstrate my theories of feminine independence, then and there.

It was with many an inward quake that I struck the match that was to touch the fuses off, and how I did want to run when their sputtering began! I began the descent at a normal and manlike gait

that grew easier with distance, and all would have gone well but that I heard an inquiring bark from Bingo. There he was, investigating the burning fuse. I flew back and, when he would not follow me, ended by picking him up and tearing down that slope carrying a very indignant and struggling dog. I had lost all my nonchalance but I still had my dog.

Bang! Bang! Bang! All three charges answered the roll. How glad I was of that. It demonstrated that I could lay a fuse properly, besides which I had no fancy for having those much-impressed men watch me as I probed about to find out why a piece of dynamite had not banged.

The stone was broken beautifully. Chow got down two loads, and I began the posts yesterday afternoon, working till it was dark. It is really very simple. The stones are just placed where they look nice and the chinks are filled with cement. I used Mr. James' spirit level and square to keep the sides plumb. I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am of myself.

The gate itself is to be a very wonderful affair made of young tamarac poles. The idea is all my own and Mr. James has expressed unqualified disapproval of it,—expressed it very volubly all the time he was making the frame. Now that the frame is made, I am to fill it in with the letters A-R-C-A-D-Y made from the tamarac. I am

anxious to have the posts done and get at it. Enclosed is a picture of what my gateway is expected to look like when finished.

I intend to make rustic rails for the driveway bridge, also seats in the rose garden and under the poplars by the tennis court, after the same manner.

More people than Mr. James disapprove of my apparent frivolity. Last night, just as I was beginning this letter to you, two neighbours were strolling over the place in a frank tour of inspection. Tent walls are slight detriment to the wonderful acoustics of evening air, so I heard their conversation distinctly.

"Wall," one said, "she must be either a millionaire or—or just foolish. Stone gateposts! And a curved lane, when it might have been straight! Besides, did you ever hear the beat of taking so much good land as she has marked out here for that game of lawn tennis? That sort of thing might be all right on a rocky hillside where the land is no good for anything else; but here! Why, my wife made forty dollars out o' Spanish onions on a patch no bigger than this!"

"Still," the other said, "they tell me over to Brown and Bartons that she pays cash for everything. I asked them particular. Didn't seem as though she would, what with them clothes. Spot cash it is, for everything."

"Wall, maybe she can, maybe she can. But

I know I couldn't if I ran my farm like a fancy park. That's what I told Jemima, just the other day when she wants to fill in that little front yard with just flowers. She says, 'That Kirk girl is right; there's things in the world besides money.' And I says, 'Maybe there is, but they don't pay very well,' I says."

My cellar is all finished. It smells so new and clean and stoney! I go down and just walk round and round and round in it. The frame of the house is all ready to put up.

Write me a big letter and tell me if as much has happened on the whole prairie in the last week as I have told you of in this fruit farm budget.

Your old pal,

JAN.

Arcady, April 12th.

Dear Nan:

Was much amused at your description of yourself in overalls driving your new tractor plow, and your regret that no handsome captain was there to compliment you on your appearance and pluck. I told him of your new venture and he said, "We must certainly hand it to Canadian girls. They lead the world."

So I should think that the mental picture of yourself, driving your tractor plow at the head of a procession composed of all the girls of the world, should satisfy even you.

Joking aside, it has done you no end of good to have the man of the house, as you called me, get out and leave you "on your own." Had I been there this spring you would have gone right on making delicious lemon pies and snowy biscuits, and it would have been Jan, not Nan, on the tractor plow.

Mentioning your lemon pies has made me long for one of your Sunday suppers right to-night. Usually I am so interested in the outside-the-house affairs that I hate to settle down to fussing with the cooking.

One day last week it rained, the warmest, soft-

est April shower. I covered my gateposts and put in a day at mending and cooking. At the end of it I felt so domestic that I hated to start out again, but it does not happen that way often.

The frame of my house is up and I can tell what size each room will be. I have a living-room and two bedrooms in the front, and a kitchen, pantry and bath at the back. When I have company, the living-room will be the dining-room; when alone, I shall have a cosy corner in the kitchen.

The contractor advises me to have the house Beaver-boarded so that they may hurry. As in the case of Royalty, a suggestion from him must be treated in the nature of a command. Anyhow, as the only plasterer the valley boasted has gone to France, there is nothing else for it. He says that they can have the inside finished in two or three weeks so that I can move in; then the shakes can be put on afterward.

They started to blast on Friday and expect to be a week. We hauled the chickens in their brooders over to the other side of a small hill in Captain Fenton's orchard, as the shocks are very hard on them. It is rather a nuisance to go over there to feed them, but Chow has become very expert. Four have died and he buries them so mournfully. He says they got "too muchee eat."

The noise of the blasting was terrific, and pieces of stumps flew hundreds of yards. I asked C.F. at the well if it all took him back to the Marne.

He did not answer a word but I saw his eyes. Saw in that moment that he longs desperately to go back into that cauldron; to again "weigh in" as he calls it. No wonder the British army is invincible, in spite of colossal blunders behind the lines!

This morning, the spring air was so tempting that I decided to walk the three miles in to church. I had not inquired which of the four churches belonged to whom, so I selected the one that looked the least likely to contain Mrs. Good.

The speaker was a small man with rather a look of hunger stamped on his features. Not the usual hunger—I expect he has a garden—but a longing for encouragement, sympathy, a broader outlook and success.

Amongst his announcements he called a meeting of the board to discuss business matters of importance. I heard it whispered that the business on hand was the raising of his overdue salary so that he might attend the coming conference; that, if they could pay it all, he was very anxious to take his wife along for a much needed change.

As he made this announcement he coloured to the roots of his hair. It was plain that it seemed to him like asking for open charity. His text was something from Job and his words had to do with patience with our surroundings. I disagreed with him heartily. There is far, far too much patience with existing conditions.

Here in this tiny town are four churches, each holding a scattered few, each straining to meet mounting obligations, straining to make three or four dollars so that it may do the work of one. As we came out, I could see by the few that the other church steps revealed, that their condition was much the same. Isn't it all too silly?

Soon after noon Saundy came and asked me to walk up the mountain side. I had promised him to go as soon as the ground had dried sufficiently. With some surprise he pronounced my brogans as "decent things to climb in," and said what a pleasure it would be not to have to be rescuing torn skirts.

We climbed up and away to where the orchards and river flats seemed like a map below us, and the rushing Goat River Canyon a white ribbon among the green trees and rocks.

The sight of the four artistic church spires brought back my morning's meditations. I sounded Saundy on the subject. To my amazement, he, once a rabid Scotch Presbyterian, thinks even as we in the matter.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "but it would be a grand thing in this new country. One big church; the centre of the musical, the social, the Red Cross, the Physical Training, the educational and the moral and spiritual life of the place."

"But why," I asked, "has it not been done that

way? Is it that they would not all work together?"

"Nonsense! Why, they do it that way now. The Methodists don't get up a big chicken supper for Methodists alone. They expect the Presbyterians, Anglicans, Baptists and Catholics, with a few Mormons thrown in, for good measure. The same crowd are all at the Presbyterian lawn social. The Church of England bazaar sells to every one of them, or there'd no' be one at all, and all kinds buy tickets and laugh when the Roman Catholics put on a play.

"Don't you see. It's folly to say they wouldn't work together. They're doing it. Only, now they divide the money and the results."

"Do you suppose," I asked, "that there is any one big enough, in the whole world, to put the idea across?"

"Just around this hill," he said, "on the south slope, I think the crocuses will be out. And by going home by that hollow we can get the first buttercups."

The crocuses were there. The bank was a drift of delicate, bluish mauve. I filled my hat with the fairy mountain flowers. On the way down, *via* the buttercups, I had my first glimpse of our arch enemy, the gopher.

Saundy told me that the constant peppering that I had heard this morning was men after the first of the pests with their twenty-twos.

"But on Sunday?" I asked.

"Sure on Sunday, then. Why no'? One rests his horses that day so has a good chance; and if it's not a religious duty to get red of pests like that, then I don't know one. You'll be at it yourself before very long."

I have bought two turkey hens and settings and have given them a corner in the barn. Some one told me that it takes brains to raise young turkeys but I am not trusting, even in them, too much. I have the Government Circular Number Four on the matter as well.

Before concluding, let me say that I have seen Peter. Yesterday I was down in my strawberry patch—pardon my pride—and I noticed from there that Peter had seen me and for some reason was strolling down toward the fence. I let him get quite close before I appeared to see him, and when I did, I picked up my hoe and went straight home, wishing that I might have stayed to see the effect. Curiosity must have overcome his native caution, since he has changed his tactics from constant flight into investigation.

He looks just as I thought he would and just as you think he does, so I need not describe him.

Here is a plan of my house, and much love

from

JAN.

Arcady, April 17th.

Look here, Nannette Willoughby Gale.

What is this I read of in the Fort Weyne Bulletin about your being nominated by the Liberals to contest M. P. Devereaux in the coming elections? News like that about, and you can fill a whole letter with the silly antics of a collie pup and the sillier notion that Lester Owen is lonely! I had heaps of interesting things to tell you, about Peter and Captain Fenton, but you can just wait for them until you have told me all this, word for word and step by step.

The blasting of stumps has all been finished and I breathe again. They are gathering the stumps into mammoth piles for burning, after which there will be the ploughing to do.

Mrs. Good untied her apron string for long enough to send Johnny, that's her son, over to ask if I would please not blast or burn when the wind blew in her direction as it made her very ill.

I piously restrained a wicked impulse to keep him for about an hour, make him tea and have him promise to come again. Instead, I politely asked him to tell his mother that we would certainly not cause her any avoidable inconvenience. Com-

pared with what I might have done, I think she got a very good answer, but, alas, I seem doomed never to please her.

When Johnny left, Chow watched him down through the trees, then:

"Hell," he said.

Sometimes his pronunciation of English is perfect.

"Chow!" I said sharply. "Men in this country do not say that to ladies."

"Solly you lady," he said; then *re* Johnny, "Ally men round here come tell you same; what you do then?"

I forget what I said to that.

About two that afternoon a northeast wind blew down the canyon right past Arcady onto Goods', and before I saw what he was at, that Chinaman had lit fire to every pile on the place. The piles were green and little inclined to burn, but the *smoke!*

"And *would* you *believe* it?" she said to the Captain, "she sent that heathen out to light the fires the very *minute* the wind changed."

She delicately took her knitting and sat in the Captain's den all afternoon.

"Why *ever* did you do that?" I asked Chow in despair.

"She no like you. I no like her."

"But, Chow! That only makes it worse."

Seeing an inclination to lecture on my part he

shuffled off, and I am sure I caught the words "fix her, fix her yet," as he went. Captain Fenton's Chinaman dislikes her heartily too. He has been grumpy ever since because obliged to make her tea while there yesterday afternoon. She drank the tea but said she never ate after an Oriental. Chow told me this, and asked, "What for she go church all time? She get no good." I was unable to answer this.

I have finished the gate posts, all but the tops. Saundy is going to chip an urn from solid stone for the top of each. I shall plant nasturtiums in them in the summer and kanickinick in the winter. Quite Newportian, eh?

Had I told you that, elated with my success with the gateposts, I sent to *The Craftsman* for designs and specifications for building a fireplace? I thought the stone would make up into one quite suitable for my living-room. The directions, when they came, were really quite decipherable and I have a good beginning made.

First, I put a four-foot-deep base of cement. The frost never goes below that depth here. Of course, that cement base has a number of big pieces of rock in it, rock being considerably cheaper than cement. I am two feet above the ground now at it, and hated to take Sunday off.

Chow tends the chickens religiously and gets the stones down for me. He is almost as excited about the fireplace as I am. We should finish it

this next week. I have hired a man to finish the shakes so as to get on. The chimney will be made by the simple expedient of setting up a stovepipe and building round it.

Nicky has been to call again, his excuse this time being a present of a cute, yellow kitten, of which Bingo is inordinately jealous. He asks thousands of questions about the fireplace and I learn from him that there is small chance that a fireplace built by a *girl* will "burn."

Sometimes these doubts that are wirelessing about in the air get my number—or key or whatever it is—and I wonder too. However, I am following the directions and measurements to the nth of an inch, so, if the cement will hold the stones together, I can't see why it shouldn't "burn."

Here is a surprise for you; Molly has a colt. I was on the point of putting the little stranger out of the yard when Molly objected and showed possession. This small beginning—colt and calf—fills me with the ambition of owning a stock farm. It is easy to pasture stock on the Kootenay flats in the summers, and the winters, being short, are inexpensive.

Once in a while an animal strays, but an Indian can usually be induced to bring it in for four or five dollars, sometimes so promptly as to cause suspicion.

Yes, I really must have more stock, both horses and cattle.

Have knitted two pairs of socks this month. Evenings are not spent giddily in Arcady.

There is a small forestry draft quartered here. Captain Fenton brought two officers to call one afternoon. I served tea on a lumber pile and they both asked me to go to a dance that the soldiers are to give in about a month.

A dance, Nan! Do you suppose that if such a thing really happens, I shall know how to act?

Yours, with confident hopes of real news soon,

JANET KIRK.

Arcady, April 24th.

Dear Nan:

Words fail me when I try to tell you how disappointed I am in you. Here I was, expecting humble apologies for your negligence in not informing me of your political aspirations—and to be told that these political aspirations are *non est!*

If, as you say, a committee composed of all the elements of the district asked you to represent them, I simply cannot imagine why you didn't accept. Of course, I know that you have not my keen enthusiasm for the feminist cause, but I thought you would be sure to take on so certain a thing as that.

Devereaux will be helpless now that his wife is gone. She wrote all his speeches last election. Will you ever forget the time she had to prompt him twice! Go in and win, Nan, and make us all proud of you. Can you not see that it is your chance, yes, and your duty, to place yourself where you can get after the speculators who are preventing neighbours from coming near you? I do wish I were there for a little while!

My fireplace is finished. I topped off the chimney by lantern light last night. Can you picture me, silhouetted high in a circle of light, frantically

trying to finish my week's program in time to sing the National Anthem before the arrival of the Sabbath?

When the chimney was completed, Captain Fenton swept the débris off the living-room floor into the fireplace and we lit a fire.

It did not smoke.

There was a blazing fire in a minute: such a fire that the sparks went out and up among the stars. I hoped that every neighbour saw them.

It was lucky that all was well, for had it not been, I believe I was tired enough to have gone into hysterics then and there, with Saundy, Captain Fenton and Chow sitting about on nail kegs. Each of these, in his own way, has wonderful command of himself, and each has the idea that I have. *Voila!*

To make a celebration of the first fire, I brought grape-juice and pound cake from the tent.

Chow wouldn't eat with us, although, after the interest he had taken in my masonry and the help he had been, I would have been glad to have had him do so. He gratefully took his portion and trotted down to the squatter's shack, where he lives, looking very lonesome.

I longed to have Aunt Abigail see him. She is scandalised almost to breathlessness over this venture of mine: scandalised that I live all alone in an unknown (to her) wilderness: scandalised that my farm is near those of single men, and

doubly, trebly scandalised that a heathen Chinee lives right on the same place.

Aunt Abigail has a favourite nephew—so favourite that, as far as I know, he has never once been cut out of her will—who, by virtue of some pull that aunt once had with the Foreign Secretary, is an under, under secretary in the Legation at Peking.

In answer to her tirade against Chow I told her that I hoped that Andrew served as faithfully and lived as decently among the Chinese as Chow does in Canada. For this piece of insolence I was again "cut out," although I hardly see how I had had time to "cut in" since my last offence.

Although it was almost eleven o'clock, the smoke of the fireplace brought other callers. A Mr. and Mrs. Perry, who live beyond Peter, came in on their way from town. Mrs. Perry is a darling. When I tell you that she thinks the things that I have done are perfectly wonderful, you will see why I appreciate her so highly. In return, I admired her three adorable, roly-poly, brown-eyed kiddies; so with that for a basis we should be great friends.

When they left, Bob, as she calls him, was in possession of my fireplace plans, and they are going to have one before next winter. To-morrow she is going to send me down a loaf of her special brown bread.

I mention this incident in particular because of

your remark that you would rather have no neighbours at all that some that I have found. Eliminating one or two, whom I intend to civilise a bit as opportunity affords, I have found the few I have already met to be a very fair average, and, according to Saundy, some fairer ones await just around the corner.

When I told you that my house was to have a bathroom, the accent was all on the "room" part of it, but my dream of some day having running water is to come true very soon.

Captain Fenton took levelings of the stream from the back of his place and finds that, if a flume were run along for about two hundred yards to the place where the well is, there would be fall enough to drive a hydraulic ram or water motor. We are ordering one between us and I shall have Arcady's share of the water pumped into a tank in my attic. On Albemarle there will be a big tank for the purpose of irrigating.

Some one told me that the Mr. Worth from whom I bought Betsy put in his own bath fixtures and plumbing from instructions in a book. Having seen this Mr. Worth, I know that if he can plumb from a book, I can too. The plumber that once was here is fighting Germans side by side with the plasterer and stonemason, so I will carry on in his place too.

I have ordered a book on the subject, costing two dollars. You shall hear how I succeed. Also,

by the way of burning my bridges behind me, I have ordered a galvanised tank for the attic.

Mr. Good came to Captain Fenton to ask if they might lay pipes from the motor to their place. They have been having an awful time getting water. They dig wells but, after a few months, each one goes "dead" and they have to dig another. The dollar and a half a month he offered to pay will pay for the motor after a time—quite a time to be sure—but then there is no expense after it is once installed. The mountain water does the work.

How would you like to have some ice-cold, crystal-clear mountain water piped along to the Three Bar Ranch?

The men are ploughing the land. It is a pretty rough job the first time. Dexter and Molly are earning the four dollars a day that I get for their use. Then all the small roots must be gathered and burned, after which it will be ploughed the other way on, and left to the tender mercies of Chow and me.

The piles of green stumps burn slowly; the smoke is profuse and it seems to be a popular season for northeast breezes.

As Chow had only a few days before harrowing and then settling to steady gardening, I got him to work on the tennis court this last week. He got it levelled and spread the cinders but it was so soft that I saw that I must have it rolled with

a heavy roller. The heavy roller was the next problem. I bought a piece of zinc and made it into a circular pipe sixteen inches in diameter and thirty inches in length. This was filled with cement, with a stick through the middle to fasten the handles to. Chow pulled this back and forth for hours, finally fixing it so that Dexter pulled it one way on a long rope.

Captain Fenton helped with the nets and tapes, and when he had finished we had a game. Nicky, who is seldom absent now when anything of importance goes on, was the audience.

"Well," he said, when we had finished a set, "I would of thought you could of beat him."

I induced the child to change the subject as quickly as possible but I could not blame him too much for I had had the same idea. You know, I rather fancy my game, and, in this instance, I hadn't at all intended to play my hardest with an opponent who would be unable to hurry about the court.

Well. He had no need to hurry. He made me a present of two games in the set to let me keep my self-respect. but gone is all my conceit. I said nothing of having won a Provincial championship, but wonder now how I ever managed to do it.

I intend to have tea and tennis every Saturday afternoon when I become acquainted with more of the "fans"; and in this way do my bit toward

encouraging a community spirit among the neighbours here.

When Mr. McGregor asked me, that first day, what size place I wanted, I said that it must be at least large enough to hold a tennis court and an asparagus bed. My twin fancies lie right next each other. Now that Chow has the court rolled down he is digging up the asparagus bed. It is dug to the depth of eighteen inches with fertilizer well worked in. If Chow is expert at anything it is in getting soil into a perfect condition. Sometimes I think he is slow but he says, "If I go slow, plants will hurry." However, there is little hurry about asparagus plants; they take their own good time and my impatience to have tips to cut avails me nothing—or would not, if it were not for the kindness of my neighbours.

Captain Fenton is setting in grape vines at one end of his patch and so is donating eight eight-year-old roots.

I set these in in a very scientific manner, per book, and while I was trying to imagine that I saw them gaily sprouting, I noticed that my neighbour, Peter Gordon, was trundling a wheel-barrow down the road. You may imagine my amazement when he turned in at the gate of Arcady.

I spent the interval until he got round to the patch in summoning sufficient severity with which to meet one who had so misread my noble motives. Please do not sniff. We, who are growing perish-

able eatables so that the Allies' demand for wheat and beef may be filled, are as proud of our "bit" as are you of yours.

Peter's pleasant smile partially dissolved my severity.

"Good morning, Miss Kirk," he began. "I wonder if you will allow me to contribute to the new asparagus bed. I have heard that you are anxious to have tips for cutting, and, as I want the ground for something else, I hope that you will find these acceptable."

Peter's pleasant speech entirely dissolved my severity.

He had brought several big roots and commandeered my spade and set them in for me, telling me how they should be treated for the first year or so. Before leaving, he asked if there was anything else he could do for me, but I answered that, as the only thing I could think of was only fit for a very young or very foolish man, I would not mention it.

When he had gone and I was giving just a few lingering pats to the soil, Captain Fenton's shadow fell across my work. I told him of Peter's generosity. He volunteered to this information the wholly adequate "Ah!"

"Mr. Gordon," I defended at once, "is merely a good-hearted neighbour like your own self."

At his quizzical smile my colour rose. There is a most decided disadvantage in arguing against

the meanings that may be condensed in the word "Ah."

The next afternoon I spent in town, buying seeds for Arcady, everything from clover to artichokes. After that I paid two or three belated calls and arrived home round about six o'clock. Far up the road I was struck with the fact that Arcady somehow looked different, but it was not until I reached the gate that my mind focused down to the reason. The tip top was gone from my fourth cedar.

I thanked Chow for his pleasant surprise.

"Not me," he said in a tone that disclaimed any more of such foolishness on his part. "Mr. Gordon, I guess."

"Who told Mr. Gordon I wanted it off?"

"Dono, Mr. Saundy, maybe. They both Scosh."

Later, when Saundy came to milk I asked him who had told Peter about the tree. He, too, was vague.

"I see the chink over to Peter's sometimes, and there is a small boy that finds out a lot of things one way or another."

I was still puzzling over the matter when Captain Fenton called from the well to ask who had lain his enemy low.

"Your enemy?" I asked.

"The tip of that tree. It has mocked me as an incompetent, night and day: has rubbed it in that I am unable to do even so small a favour

as that for a neighbour. Who was the victor?"

"It seems to have been Peter."

"Peter: The infernal scoundrel!"

"The *what*?"

"The infernal scoundrel. To steal a march on a cripple like that."

Two pleasant facts stand out from this incident: whatever the motives or promptings in the matter were, the long-wanted-off tree-top *is off*, and also, for once, Captain Fenton neglected to say "Ah!"

My fruit trees arrived this week. We put them in a trench till the land is ready. There seem to be millions of them. Getting them planted promises to be a prodigious job. I have engaged Saundy to help. It seems that the trees must be planted certain distances apart and correct to a hair's breadth, so that, no matter from what angle one looks at an orchard, the trees are straight lines into the distance.

Saundy is official tree planter for the whole district. The few exceptions to this rule are all crooked, to hear him.

Nicky has arrived and is gathering shingles and chips, so I know he wants a little fire in the fireplace—just to watch it dance, he says. He has a decided eye for beauty although it would be hard to say where he gets it. Their little flower plot is entirely his doings, and his face, as he pores over my flower seed books, is a study. He

is doing errands for me so as to earn money to buy some wonderful things for his little plot. He thinks it great that I don't agree with most folks that things to make money with are better than flowers.

He brought his mother to call one day. His certainty that we would naturally take to each other was touching: we did it to please him. She is a pleasant little woman, but unimaginative. She had never even heard of a house without a dining room before.

Re the fireplace, she said:

"Some folks think you *so* clever, but I dunno. Any woman could do it if she hadn't a man to hamper her."

Do you suppose she thinks that, or was she consoling me?

As ever,

Your Jan.

Arcady, May the first.

Dear Nan:

Your last letter received and contents noted. As there is no allusion to the political situation, I am mad at you again.

It has rained all week; not temperamental April showers, but steady, steady downpour. The poplars and paper birches about the spring and up the creek are a beautiful young green. Also, alas, the fruit trees in the trenches show signs of wanting to burst their green. They should be planted immediately; but they can't. The ground cannot be ploughed in the rain. The man asked for another week on his contract, in return for which he will assist Saundy with the planting.

The "Captain and Peter" roots in the asparagus bed take kindly to their new home. The rain has started them growing and I cut quite a lot of tips yesterday. There was a pound and a half. Multiplying that space by the size of the whole patch and reckoning at twenty cents a pound—I won't trouble your brain with the arithmetic of it—I find that I should have four to five dollars a cutting when the plants have reached maturity.

If the sun shines warmly and there are frequent rains—a combination by no means certain—there

should be a cutting every other day till strawberry time. In that case, I will be able to exist past this trying season in future years, even if the price of chicken food is the same, per weight, as rubies and diamonds.

You have heard of counting chickens before they were hatched. Did you know that it is sometimes done with turkeys as well? My two settings, that were to have blossomed into such magnificent Christmas dinners, *did not hatch.* Saundy says the blasting killed them, of course, and was surprised that I didn't know that it would.

My grief is divided between this matter and the fact that the mountain rats have been stealing my dear wee baby chicks.

When the brooders were built, I had them set about a foot off the ground to prevent skunks and such things from taking shelter beneath them, and I had the corners bound with tin at the bottom to keep out the kinds of rats that I knew.

As I become acquainted with the mountain rat, I find that none of these things discommode him in the very least. He has no desire to take shelter beneath the house, and his mode of entry is to find, or make, an opening under the roof.

When, after many fresh starts, I finally got my brood counted I found that there were only nine hundred thirty-seven. Allowing for the four that died of their own accord, that leaves fifty-nine that have been taken by rats. Isn't it sickening!

It does indeed take brains to raise things: brains and eternal vigilance.

To these we are adding firearms, traps and poison, and Bingo caught one all by himself. They are big, almost the size of a black squirrel, and have a huge, bushy tail that thumps, thumps all the time.

I have shot three although I much prefer the other means of capture. Their depredations are all made at night, which makes it necessary to sit in the brooder in the dark till one comes along. I cannot even take Bingo for protection, as he would scare them off.

When they appear, an electric flash or other light will hypnotise them into waiting for one to shoot them. My first victim obligingly gave me three trials. I held my flash between my knees and in my excitement the first shot went wild. The animal waited. His tail thumped on. With the next shot, I saw his tail drop. And still he waited. Next time I made a bull's-eye.

By this time I had company.

Captain Fenton, at the sound of the first shot, hurried to Arcady in wonder. Peter, on hearing two shots—the usual distress signal in the hills—started post haste; and at the third, Mr. Good, having no idea what three shots might mean, came, finishing dressing as he ran.

It was the unanimous opinion of this meeting that in a chicken house, looking for rats, was no

place for a girl in the middle of the night. While I agreed heartily with them, I tried to point out that the rats were responsible for the hours that they may be captured in, not I. All three were very eloquent as to the efficacy of traps, and I was marched back to the house for that night.

It was hours before I got to sleep, and, before dropping off, I decided that the chickens should, or would, rest late after their excitement; that I would sleep instead of rising early to feed them.

It was not so to be. At exactly ten past six Nicky was pounding persistently on the door of the tent—doing it with his thoughtful mother's full and ardent permission.

They had heard dim shots from somewhere in the night, and later had seen men, about a dozen Nicky guessed, with lights, walking round on my farm.

I have been endeavouring, surreptitiously, to inculcate into Nicky's inquiring nature some respect for other people's personal affairs. That the training had taken root was evident, but it was in imminent danger of being swamped by his colossal curiosity. Bad taste, in Nicky's mind, had more to do with castor oil and things of that sort than with asking questions. Finally, after much thought, he hit on an excellent way to put it.

"My mother would have a fit if men walked

around our place in the night," he said. "Did you know there were men here?"

"Yes, I knew it."

"*Did* you? Did you know who they was?"

"Yes."

"Who—why——?"

"You see, Nicky, we were just having a mountain rat party."

"What's that?"

"Nicky, how would you like to earn fifty cents, maybe more?"

"Gee! How?"

"I'll give you fifty cents for every mountain rat you can catch on my place. You can put traps anywhere you like. Do you want to?"

He was gone in a flash as I had supposed he would be. I took off my bathrobe and finished my beauty sleep.

By noon Nicky had four traps set on the ledge under the roofs of the brooders. By night Mr. Worth had discovered the fact and the traps were all back in their place about the Worth fowl house.

Mr. Worth cannot understand why Nicky is so much more anxious to do things for me than for them, and wonders how any one could ever cope with his notions.

"It would take a great deal of imagination," I said.

He looked at me doubtfully, to see if I could be serious, then left. That imagination had any-

thing to do with bringing up a boy was too foolish an idea to consider.

Nicky was soon back with the gleeful tidings that Captain Fenton had offered to rent him two traps, the rental to be five per cent of the gross receipts, or, as Nicky put it—"five cents for every rat I ketch."

Nicky has tried nobly not to show that he thinks I am knocking trade when I shoot one that was surely just going to get caught.

I asked Captain Fenton how he intended spending his five cents each time. He said that was immaterial. That the main point was that Nicky should not begin his industrial career with the something-for-nothing idea.

Owing to the fact that it has rained all week and no outside work could be done, I have been at work on my living-room. I use the word "work" advisedly, but the results exceed even my wildest expectations. The room is really a dream and I would give anything if you could see how well that grey and blue striped Chesterfield melts into its surroundings. You remember what a misfit it was in your sunny tan room. It was only that it was in the wrong environment. I can sympathise with it for I was too.

But to get back to our muttons.

I tinted the walls a delicate shade of grey, and enamelled the woodwork and the strips that hold the beaverboard in grey about two tones deeper.

I have never liked the strips stained a dark colour as it makes a room look so strippy.

I sent a small sample of the tapestry on the davenport to The Bay, and got a very successful blue and grey rug to match. The fireplace stones just naturally slide in with the scheme.

But here is my *coup d'état*. I enamelled the frames of all my sketches grey like the woodwork, and painted the mats with silver paint. I wonder if you can imagine the result. Some of the water-colours are particularly good. They seem like bursts of sunlight on a misty morning. It seemed rather a shame to see the gold leaf going under, but they are really prettier this way, and so harmonious as well.

For the sake of having a positive touch in all this vagueness, I enamelled my willow reading lamp, the reading table and the willow chairs with black Japan; also a Chinese basket that Chow donated for the fireplace wood. As I said, I wish that you might see it all.

We moved in as soon as the paint on the living-room was dry.

The bedrooms and kitchen remain to be decorated in the next rainy spell, which is pretty sure to be in haying time.

My treasures were scarcely in their places when I had my first visitors in my new home.

The Essingtons have called.

These Essingtons are practically the only people

out this way that Saundy admires—barring present company, of course—and he has wondered if they would be moved to take me up.

"They're no' snobbish, you understand," he says, "but they don't waste their time."

But now they have been here, *en* bunch, and his mind is at rest.

Having had, from him, a line on all of them, I enjoyed their visit that much more. I already knew that Mrs. Essington is a "graund woman," a bit "ower particular" but of sterling worth when one gets to know her; that each of the five daughters superintends some special branch of the farm work; that Eleanor, the eldest, is nicknamed "bees" by the others, being the family apiarist—and a very successful one at that; that Maude is the housekeeper and cook—she is also the family beauty, making a combination rather unusual; that Cynthia is the stock and poultry member; that Norine handles the fruit, besides teaching music to a large class in the winter, and that Betty, the youngest, has an irrepressible habit of telling the truth at most un-psychological moments. She and the mother are the gardeners.

Their r's are the very broadest and they are all so interesting that I wanted to listen to them all at one time. While there is very little choice, I think that Betty chatters the most. She began with:

"Oh, Mother. Don't you just love Miss Kirk's

rig? You will not let us wear overalls but you certainly can't (cawn't, she said it) object to breeks on the score of looks. We just must all have some. Men's work can only be done properly in men's clothes. Anyhow, girls in England——"

Here the conversation became general. They were on a subject near to their hearts. Girls in England, it seems, do everything. A cousin of theirs who had had a change of car for every costume has turned them all in and is doing army stable work. A friend who had been so timid as to faint at the sight of a mouse is running a riveter, a most difficult thing to do, high up in the air in a ship yard.

You on your tractor plough, my dear Nan, are not at the head of the line of feminine wonders at all, but somewhere away down the ranks.

Their war enthusiasm can be pardoned when one considers that they have sent the father and two sons from the family, and that every relative they have in England is taking part in the conflict—the men on the firing line and the women at various war occupations behind the lines.

Cynthia came out of her contemplation of my sketches to inquire about that one I did of the road to Fort Weyne.

"But it isn't like that, really?" she asked.

"Exactly."

"Do you mean to say that there are times when

there is absolutely nothing to be seen but the skyline and one prairie chicken?''

''The prairie chicken wasn't there at all,'' I said. ''It often isn't. I put it in out of generosity. For the rest, it is a faithful portrayal. And one might sit in a million different spots on the prairie and paint exactly the same thing.''

''Then it is no wonder that no one wants to live there.''

''Oh, but many do. They rave about the wide, wind-swept vastness of it all; about the room to breathe and the sense of personal freedom they feel there; about the roseate dawns across the greening wheat fields, or the flaming sunsets across the yellowing wheat fields, or just about the wheat fields.''

''They really do? Well, I assure you I shouldn't. I don't wonder you were glad to get away.''

''How did you know I lived there?''

''Claymore told us that'' (Claymore is Captain Fenton). ''We inquired about you, as we were so much interested in the delightful place you are making.''

''You know,'' chimed in Betty, ''our call today was really on the tennis court, and we are all so pleased to have found a dream of a room and so congenial a person added unto us.''

''Betty!''

It was a scandalised chorus.

"It's the truth," Betty went on; "and oh, how this family does hate that! You'll find, however, Miss Kirk, that they will not leave this place until they have been invited over to play."

"I cannot tell you," I answered, "how pleased I shall be to have all or any of you come to play, any time you can."

"Thanks so much. There then, I've fixed that, as I told them I should." (Chorus of "*Betty!*") "I've wanted so much to tear up our currant patch and put a court there, but my stony-hearted mother would not hear of it."

"But this is not the only court here?" I asked.

"Practically. Out this way at least. In town, the Y.M.C.A. did have a good one but mother didn't know the Y. or the M. or the C. or the A. so she would not let us go. Our place touches yours at the back east corner. We'll put a stile at the fence and use the short cut down. And now, Mother dear, don't you think I have restrained my curiosity about Peter long enough? How on earth, Miss Kirk, did you subdue him so quickly? I've quizzed Clay, but one doesn't get a word out of him."

"Betty! Don't be impossible!"

With practice, the family has come to say this in perfect unison, but I noticed that their faces did not depict any great aversion to hearing what I had to say about Peter.

"Is Peter subdued?" I asked.

"He topped your cedar for you, did he not?"

"Yes, but I've really only spoken to him once."

"Quick work. All the valley is on the *qui vive* to know how you do it. Get Maude to tell you about the time she went for plums."

"We will, rather, talk of something interesting," was Maude's rejoinder.

"Then I'll tell you myself," Betty went on. "We wanted some Damson plums for jam and there was none to be had but what Peter—yes, mother dear, I do mean Mr. Gordon—had. So Mother asked us to go for them. We had heard that he had objected strenuously to the fancied advances of one or two young women, and none of us were very keen about going. We finally settled it by drawing lots and Maude lost.

"That is all, except that we heard afterward that he had said, when some one jokingly asked if it was to be an Essington next, that, at least, they paid him the compliment of sending the pretty one. That was a year ago but Maude can go into a rage about it even yet."

Before leaving they invited me over for Sunday dinner; the first invitation I have had here,—except Mr. Good's.

They are going to leave their racquets and balls here so that they may run down for a game at any time.

It never rains but it pours. Last night I had another caller—another girl. I hadn't realised

how lonesome I was getting for you, or some girl to talk to, till all these came. The last one was Miss Attwood—first name, Rose—who teaches in the little school half a mile from here. She came with the strange request that I allow her to board with me.

"But," I said, "I couldn't take a boarder. Why, I not only have meatless days—some of them are almost eatless. To-day, for instance, I had an eggnog of three raw eggs in milk—cream, I might say—for breakfast. Then, I had nothing more till five o'clock, when I had a tin of beans, soda crackers, peanuts and tea. How would you like to live like that?" I asked conclusively.

"Oh, my goodness," she said, "you need me more than I need you. I am an elegant cook. Really. If you will just let me into a big apron after school I will soon have you ten pounds heavier."

"Heaven forbid!"

"But you will take me on, won't you?"

"Why are you leaving Worth's?" I asked, true to my canny self in a bargain.

"They don't want Glossy; that's my pony. You have lots of pasture so if I pay you thirty a month would you take us in? You may ride her whenever I am not doing so. I will buy her oats. Do say you will."

So she is coming to-morrow.

I wonder.

A girl companion; a horse to ride in perfect delicacy, some one around who loves to cook, and thirty dollars a month!

Why am I always suspicious of what should be a good bargain?

Rose would, I think, be only a year or so younger than I, but she has retained every cute trick of her teens, while I have long ago shed mine, if, indeed, I ever had any.

This afternoon it was warm enough for me to sit on the porch while writing you. Saundy saw me from his cabin and strolled over.

"What's this I hear about Miss Attwood coming to stay with you?" he asked.

"Trust you to smell it in the air, Saundy. Yes, it's true. What do you think of the arrangement?"

"Personally, I will find it most convenient."

"And why so?"

"Well, it's coming on summer now. I must get my trees and garden under way; then I go up to the lookout station on the mountain when fire season comes, so I would not be able to stay on my job so well."

"You mean the cow? I can't expect Miss Attwood to milk Betsy."

"No, I don't mean the cow."

"Then, Saundy—don't be a stick. What do you mean?"

"Just that it will be convenient for me that you two girls can chaperone each other."

He smoked in silence to let this sink in; which it did, albeit slowly. Slowly it came to me that every time that Captain Fenton had been in my company for more than fifteen minutes, Saundy had strolled round and had stayed there too.

I felt a momentary resentment. Not for myself; I am not sensitive as to what people think of actions that I know to be right.

Saundy seemed to read my mind.

"It's not that, Miss Janet. I, too, know an honourable gentleman when I meet him. But there are times when a young man thinks too little and an auld woman a great deal too much. So I thought that it might help everything to come right in the end if I stayed round a bit."

"You are a friend worth having," I said; "but, Saundy, tell me this: Why doesn't the wonderful bigness of all this get into people's natures more? Right in the shadow of these gigantic hills, with the roar of that mighty canyon over there always in their ears, with the generosity of nature all about and the bigness of the work they are doing, how *can* they go about with their vision narrowed down to where they question the acts and motives of every other human being?"

"I don't know that, girl, but I've wondered about it oft, especially when I'm up yonder on the hill. You must come away up with me some

days. You would get visions up there too. That is the only kind of person I ever take up to my station."

So I am going some day, up to the mountain top to meditate. In the meantime, I am expecting some political news by return mail.

Hopefully yours,

JANET KIRK.

Arcady, May the eighth.

Dear Nan:

There was no letter from you in yesterday's mail but I got one from Lester Owen. I was greatly perturbed by his mention of having seen M.P. Devereaux go to the Three Bar Ranch twice last week.

What is in the air, Nan?

Is that old fox trying to buy or persuade you from entering the contest against him? Stick to your guns, Nan, and don't listen to him. A man who employs crookedness in his campaign is not apt to reform suddenly on being elected.

Of course, this is all mere conjecture, but, between Lester's news and the fear expressed in the Bulletin that you would not stand, I feel decidedly nervous. I do want you to uphold the standard of the Feminist Cause. I will be there when the House is opened, cheering your every word, even if I have to leave Arcady to the mercy of the gophers and mountain rats.

My boarder has been here almost a week. She is quite as handy as she had promised to be, getting her own breakfast, and helping with the night dinner. She takes her noon lunch to school, and usually rides Glossy back and forth. While she

exhibits the drawback of seldom seeing a joke just where I do—that was our bond of union, wasn't it?—I think we shall pull very well.

One morning, as she was putting up her lunch, Captain Fenton rode by on Midnight. The Captain rides magnificently, and the horse is no small part of the picture. They make a pair that one would watch till out of sight.

"Oh, Janet," said Rose, gathering up her books, "how about it? Is it to be 'hands off the Captain' for me?"

"*What?*" I asked.

"I mean, is Captain Fenton your special preserve?"

"He is not. I am in this place to run a farm, and *not* to hunt a husband. Captain Fenton or any other man is free as air as far as I am concerned, since you have put your case so plainly."

She was going out the door as I said this and leaned back to laugh with a mischievous air that she has carefully preserved.

" 'Methinks the lady doth protest too much,' " she quoted and was gone.

I am afraid I was tempted, in the next few minutes, to get out her trunk, hitch Glossy to it and start her off at a gallop. However, just here, my eye fell on that excellent text that I illuminated and framed for myself once—"Be a Sport, Janet," and my sense of humour was again in its zone.

All week the men have ploughed and burned. The breezes being mainly southwestern, the smoke has blown back onto Essingtons a great deal. They retaliate by coming over for tennis every fine afternoon. For some reason, they are not crazy about Rose, and passed without notice her hint at her dislike of eating Sunday night dinner alone. I am going there to-night, you know.

My chickens are growing beautifully and the down is being replaced by tiny feathers. I still have nine hundred thirty-seven, and we seem to have rid ourselves of rats. I shall be glad to begin to sell the chicks and reduce the ranks.

The other morning, as I stood by the stove poaching an egg, my kitchen door was opened and some one walked to my side. Rose was somewhere about and I thought it her till, at the prolonged silence, I looked up. There, if you please, stood an Indian. They call them Siwash hereabouts. This was not the usual blanketed kind that I know, but one in a store suit, Strathcona hat and celluloid collar. No one had told him that the chief *raison d'être* of a celluloid collar is its "washability."

I collected my senses with all possible speed.

"Klahowya, tillicum, I greeted.

This bit of Chinook so pleased him that he took off his hat and smiled broadly. His hair, if you please, was worn college cut. The local barber draws no race line in his artistry.

"You sell colt?" he inquired.

"No. I want him."

"You trade colt two pigs?"

"No, indeed."

"Huh. You buy two pigs?"

"How big?"

"Two months."

"How much?"

"One colt."

Wasn't he subtle! I assured him that I had nothing to either sell or trade. After watching my toast for a while he made up his mind.

"I sell you two pigs," he said.

"How much?"

"Seven dollars one, ten dollars two."

Needless to say I did not neglect a bargain of that nature. I was rather sorry he did not have four. Saundy said I got a good bargain.

In the afternoon, the Indian was back again, his waggon crowded to capacity this time with two half grown heifers.

"Why these?" I inquired.

"You see red one?"

"Yes."

"I sell him (it was her) you for fifteen dollars. See black one?"

"Yes."

"I trade him you for one colt."

"No indeedy, you will not."

He pondered for some time, then:

"I sell red one for five dollars. Trade black one for colt."

"No."

I went into the house and wrote a check for thirty dollars.

"This for the two," I told him.

He studied it with the deliberation of a Morgan; or is a Morgan deliberate?

"I want colt."

"Not for sale. I want him myself."

So he took the money and departed, and, will you believe it, he was back again that very evening with a young Hereford bull, an Indian pony that was so old and decrepit that I wondered that he had ever gotten it there, and a long string of fish, willing to trade them all for Molly's cunning colt.

I bought the fish and the bull, causing the utmost hilarity among the five Essingtons who clustered about. I told Lo not to come back with any more offers as I would *not* sell or trade the colt. I was afraid that he would get to be a habit.

The poor creature did look disappointed. He had set his heart on having the colt. It might have been interesting to see what all he would have brought as offerings. I think I could have had had almost anything but I simply could not bear the thought of having the colt become an Indian's horse. Not but what they use their

horses well. People who live near the reservation say they have never seen a Red abusing an animal.

As to the animals I bought from him, it does not sound so queer when I tell you that I have rented a quarter section belonging to the Arrow mines on Arrow Creek, and am seriously going in for stock.

The last purchase I made from Lo—he is a very good specimen—is to be the head of the herd, as for obvious reasons, if a woman is to go in for stock, it is best for her to own her own males.

This is not a delicacy of Mrs. Good's but common sense of Saundy's. If you know how little the older generation of Scotch appreciate modern parlour modesty, you will know how greatly I appreciate Saundy. I immediately appointed him Professor of Eugenics in Arcady.

He hasn't a notion of what a eugenic is, I am sure, but he caught the drift of the idea and accepted the commission.

Yesterday he drove my stock, all but Betsy, back to the Arrow, and will go every week to leave salt, count noses, take anything new I can get and see that everything is well. There are water and grass of the very finest there, a shed for shelter and a good fence all round, so I think they should be all right, even if they do have to look after themselves.

So now I own two titles,—market gardener—to

be changed, as soon as possible to fruit farmer—and stock raiser. Years when strawberries are killed in the blossom, or the rain washes the pollen from the orchard bloom, or a drought dries up the corn and cucumbers, or a wet season rots the tomatoes, then, surely, beef and pork will be a good price, or horses at a premium.

Later:

Just got back from dinner at Essingtons'. I wore that blue serge that I bought on Fifth Avenue, against your true warning that I was being highway robbed, and took a little trouble with my hair. They said I looked like a different person, which surely must have been a compliment, either going or coming.

Captain Fenton was there. It seems that he dines there every Sunday. He took his place at the head of the table quite as a matter of course. Two lieutenants of the Forestry Draft were there too. Altogether they were a very jolly party.

It is my ambition that, some day, I may be able to preside at a table with the ease and grace with which Mrs. Essington does. She keeps the conversation where it interests every one, watches the progress of the meal carefully and seems to have plenty of time to spare.

After dinner the two soldiers got out cigarettes and one offered his to the Captain who was hunting everywhere for his pipe, upsetting Betty's account books and seed catalogs in the process.

"Never mind your old pipe," Betty ordered, gathering up after him. "It was I who tidied up last Sunday night, so the chances are against your ever finding it. Take a cigarette and don't make a disturbance."

"But I've cut them out."

"You have? Why-ee?"

"Promised Edith to."

While the Captain said this with a perfectly grave face, the remark was greeted with a shout of derision, at the end of which Cynthia said:

"Before I had done that, Clay, I would have gotten her to promise to keep down to six a day herself."

At the end of the evening, Captain Fenton walked back with me in the dusk. He used some military order to command the two lieutenants, both of whom stood ready to escort me, to stay where they were.

The Essington place fronts on the Canyon Road that corners ours at right angles just past Captain Fenton's orchards. Along this road the moist roar of the Goat River canyon comes up a draw quite distinctly. To this was added the evening symphony of the spring frogs by the roadside. What a fragrance and peace there is about a country road on a Sunday evening in springtime!

Out of a soundful silence my companion spoke.

"You behaved beautifully."

"*Behaved!* How do you mean?"

"You remained silent while they disparaged, unintentionally of course, Canadian institutions that you hold most dear. I could see that you had a number of things you might have said."

"I mean to say them yet, as auspicious occasions arise."

"Good. We English need to learn that our customs are merely different—not better. And other things—clothes, for instance——"

"Clothes!" I interrupted. "From what I have heard, this neighbourhood would hardly want to consider me a standard in that matter."

"That frock might have come from the Rue de la Paix."

"Good for you! It did. But I really don't intend to quarrel with the Essingtons over any matter. I am too glad to have found them. I love the free-masonry among you all. I love to be called by my first name the way they do."

"You do!" he exclaimed; "I've often wondered. I dislike being called 'Captain' all the time, when I am only a plain farmer. Would you call me Claymore, as the others do?"

"Well, I can try. But it will be hard, for you are a bit dignified, you know."

"Thank you, Janet."

Sometimes, as I sit by the fire, I am thrilled by the way he said those three words. Then again, I wonder who this horrid cigarette smoking Edith

person is. They all seemed to know, even the two lieutenants. I believe that I shall cultivate them a bit.

She is a Lady Edith, for the Hollins one spoke of it.

I suppose with the consolation of a title and innumerable cigarettes, she needn't mind if her cavalier amuses himself in the wilds of Canada with any girl that is handy.

Still. He has tones that are wonderfully sincere.

Yours, etc.,

JANET.

Arcady, May fifteenth.

My dear Nan:

Surprise is a feeble word with which to describe my emotions when I read your letter. I was amazed, astounded, thunderstruck. Probably your other friends are also, for even Lester Owen, your nearest neighbour, had no idea that Montague was getting rid of his opponent in that manner.

So you think that being the wife of a public man is as near the limelight as you will ever care to get. Most women and more men will applaud these sentiments heartily.

The congratulations you demanded are all sent along to M. P.— his initials are fateful, aren't they? If you haven't told him that I called him a fox—what *did* I say, anyhow?—you may change it to lion, and convey to him my heartiest felicitations.

As for you, I hope you will be the very happiest ever. And I believe you will. Getting up meals to feed the hungry friends of a prominent man will be a real joy to you. If—ahem—you want any assistance at writing speeches, let me know.

It is hard to think of you in the other political camp. We shall look to hear of great things being

done by M. P. Devereaux, for he will have close means of knowing of all the iniquity in his ranks, and, of course, once knowing of it, will remove it at once.

I refrain from saddening this time of congratulations by moralising upon how the Woman's Cause is hindered by desertions from the ranks.

My trees are almost all planted. Saundy, the stumping man and Chow worked at them all week. I have put in the small things myself. It was my first experience with planting. Some one told me it would be hard work, but it really only amounts to mud-pie days grown up a bit.

The only part that troubled me in the least was getting the lines straight and the measurements exact. After that, digging the holes, dipping the roots in a bucket of soft mud that one carries along, setting them in and covering them quickly is all child's play.

Over in the orchard, the men were using the stoneboat to go through the same process, on a larger scale, with the trees.

How I love the work! The soil, with its rich, earthy odour, the warm May sunshine, and the fragrance of Balm of Gilead from over by the stream are mixed into a spring tonic such as I had never even imagined. And what a lot more pleasure I shall get from my sturdy rhubarb roots; from the strawberry plants and raspberry canes; the currant and gooseberry bushes, from

having set them where they are with my very own hands.

The grapes are between the house and the road. We shall build rustic arbours for them to climb on as they grow to require them. The rest of the small fruit is between the house and barn, quite close to a packing shed that will be built. You would find especially interesting the corner that is filled with horse-radish roots. Another has all the perennial herbs,—mint, sage, thyme and summer-savoury.

All the farmers here and hereabouts are busy spraying their orchards. One day, Mr. Good, with a barrel hand pump and one accomplice, sent over with the gentle south wind, waves of such sulphur-and-other-odorous gas that I had to vacate my front line positions. Mrs. Good may well feel scored off for the smoke and dynamite of Arcady.

On another afternoon Dexter, Molly and I assisted the Essingtons to go over their orchard. We used Captain Fenton's Duplex sprayer, taking the work in shifts, two and two about. None of them are any fonder of the odour than I am.

From over farther, on one or two of the big orchards, we can hear the chug-chug of gasolene power sprayers.

Saundy gave mine a good application of Bordeaux mixture while they were still in the trench, so as to save the trouble of tramping about the

orchard. If they require an aphis spray later, it will be of whale oil soap or black leaf. Another season of fragrance!

The authorities here are very particular in the matter of insect pests, fungus diseases, scab and so forth. If a barrel of apples comes in from another province with so much as one little scab or worm, it is considered as suitable material for a bonfire.

I have laid a stone flagging down the walk to the creek. Now that the poplars are in full leaf they interlace above this walk and keep it always shady. Besides the stones of the walk I have set roots of English violets and iris, donated by the Essingtons out of gratitude for my assistance at the spraying. I expect that the fragrance of these in future years will compensate me a hundredfold for any distaste I felt for the work I did.

The wild clematis are in full bloom. Just back of the barn a vine has clambered up on a big fir, and its graceful tendrils, on which are suspended delicate clouds of purple, are wonderful against the green. I have moved in three wild vines to my kitchen porch. They take kindly to domesticity and are out with the first tulips and narcissi.

Saundy is going to help me to move in some of the syringa and spirea that grow here in riotous profusion all through the woods.

To know that I am at last in a climate where

anything and everything that one can have a fancy for will grow fills me with utter content.

Did I tell you that I have waxed extravagant and have ordered rhododendrons to border my drive? Won't that be gorgeous along with my stone gates! I thought of ordering them when I sent for the Caragana but was not sure they would weather the winter here. Since then, however, I have seen some on one or two places so I know they will acclimatise.

The Caragana for the hedge has arrived. I must get it in first thing this week.

Peter called last evening to see whether I would sell my colt. He has a mate for it and wants the team to grow up together. I promised to consider it and let him know. The more other people want that colt, the more I seem to want him myself.

He has grown so rapidly and gotten to be so frisky that I have had to wire him into the back forty with Betsy, where he cannot trample on my garden. Molly joins him when she is not busy here, or busy with Dexter, helping out a neighbour who does not own a team.

The day I went for clematis vines, I was scrambling over rocks where the mountain slope begins when a crackle in the brush caught my attention. A young, white-tail deer was watching some object with keen attention. After a minute's wait it

moved a few inquiring steps forward. Something else had moved too, and there, not fifty feet from the deer, was Molly's colt, ears up and curious.

How I wanted my camera! I could have gotten the two in easily. They stood in this way for so long that at last, to start something, I whistled. In a flash both had wheeled and were bounding in opposite directions, the deer clearing the rocks and logs that obstructed its way up the mountain side with almost unbelievable leaps and bounds the colt making almost as good time Molly-ward.

It was then that I christened him "Mowitza," the Indian name for deer.

To return to Peter: I thought it only the proper caper to thank him for his valorous vanquishing of my cedar top. To my surprise he looked quite embarrassed, and, rather reluctantly, explained that, while he had climbed the tree with the intention of beheading it, when he had taken hold of the top it had simply toppled over in his hand. It had been shot through with several bullets at a point about two feet from the top.

"The holes were in a neat row," he said, "and another shot a few inches up would have brought it down."

"But who——?"

"The bullets came from Fenton's direction. How it must have amused him to see me up there."

"He didn't see you," I was able to console him. "He asked me who had done it."

"I am glad to know that," he said as he rose to go. "I'll come again when you have decided about the colt."

"I can phone you," I told him, thinking it best not to leave the impression that I was delaying decision to bring him back.

The Essingtons have plans in progress for a very wonderful picnic on Empire Day. They have had them before at the same place, making it a sort of annual affair. We are to go on horseback, via the Kootenay flats, to the Reclamation Farm—no, I don't know what a Reclamation Farm is, but the information will be forthcoming later. We are to take our lunch for two meals and spend the day fishing and exploring. I believe there is usually a ball game where the girls cover themselves with glory. I am quite excited over the prospect.

I have ordered a Minton cup and saucer for your engagement present, this not being a seasonable time for a gardener to embroider the usual towels.

Mrs. Montague Pearson Devereaux, eh!

I hope she intends to begin right. She has given up a glorious future so that a man may possess both it and her. For that I think she should be treated with extra-special consideration; should receive a wedding present that bespeaks

unheard-of generosity—say the fastest car afloat, or a new stone house.

For these little hints no extra charge is made. Do send me more particulars.

Your loving

JANET KIRK.

Arcady, May the twenty-second.

DEAR NAN:

Shall I ever, ever get straight lines out of my head again? It began with planting the hedge. Saundy and Captain Fenton both thought I should engage a man to do this, because, unless it was put in a straight line, it would always be unsightly. They urged that, at least, I put Chow at helping me. This, when I had gotten the idea that I could do anything on the place as well as any man. Of course, after that there was nothing for me to do but plant that hedge and plant it straight.

Cynthia Essington helped me an afternoon or so, which relieved the tedium somewhat. In the end I had enough plants left for her to put a sparse row round her turkey yard so she was very glad to have "stuck along," as she put it.

The Caragana plants are very small as yet and do very little toward covering the wire fencing. The bright idea came to me that if I planted giant sunflowers just inside the hedge, they would serve the purpose for this year and would also save dollars in chicken feed.

Accordingly I commissioned Nicky to go to town for these sunflower seeds. I asked him to

get a pound. Did you ever see a pound of sunflower seeds, Nan? Did you know that it takes a generous sized bag to hold them?

Chow's eyes stuck out like a frog's when he saw them.

"What for you get so many?" he enquired.

"To put inside my fence."

For the first time I heard Chow laugh. I had not thought he possessed such a thing as a sense of humour. And I am not sure but that I preferred him that way.

"You no need him half," he said, when he could explain himself.

Well. I planted them all—except about a cupful that I gave to Nicky. These gladdened his heart as well as preventing me from having a sunflower seed collapse. I planted them across the front. I planted them down each line fence. I planted them across the back. Straight lines all the while, you must remember. I hope never to see a straight line or a sunflower seed again as long as I live. The chicken house is surrounded with lines of them, where they will be useful for shade for the chickens when hot weather arrives.

Perhaps you may imagine with what joy I turned from all this straight-lining to the laying out of my rose garden. This plot is the space that is bounded by the drive, the stream and the stone flagged walk. It is of quite generous size—the wasteful creature!—and will be bounded—some

day—with lilacs, syringa and spirea. These are all in their places. There will be—some day soon—a small pergola over which my Lady Gay pink ramblers may disport themselves, and under it a rustic seat where one may sit to refresh one's soul with the Arcadian odours that will abound in this spot; with the music of birds and stream all about. There will be a rustic gateway into this garden, arched for the convenience of crimson ramblers. There will be a small grass plot in the centre round which spring bulbs will nestle, and back of these, Canterbury bells and hollyhocks, foxglove and daisies, peonies and bleeding heart, —and *roses*!—Jacqueminots, tea roses of every colour, the Dean Hole and Madame Ravary, beside a group of my favourite moss roses. All of these are hardy and will bloom, not only in June, but practically all season.

Do you wonder that it disturbs me to have to turn from this work to decide whether Chow is to put potatoes or beets first and where? Nicky, who has helped the rose garden along during every minute that his mother would spare him, says:

"Tell him to *go on*. That don't matter."

But Chow says:—"*That* do any time. You come see what *I* do."

And I go, for Chow is an autocrat, and an autocrat with right on his side has never, so far as I know, been unseated.

I go, and ponder on the weighty matter of whether I will have six lands put down with clover, or only four. A land, my dear Nan of the wheat fields, is the space between two rows of trees, running north and south. And it seems that a crop of clover every so often is a necessity to the soil. Many have to put clover before they can get anything to grow, but Saundy thinks mine is rich enough soil not to require that. Captain Fenton says I should have at least ten lands of clover.

"Ten!" I exclaim; "why, I wouldn't have any garden left!"

"Heaps of it. Why, girl, you're trying to kill yourself."

I cannot put his tone into the letter but it was worth even the sunflowers.

Mr. Perry came down one afternoon with his potato planter and lo! like magic the potatoes were planted. I bought my seed potatoes from him already dipped in formaldehyde. Potatoes are very little further bother here for there are no potato bugs in British Columbia. Think of that the next time you are tempted to rub it in about the mountain rats.

In return for Mr. Perry's kindness I was able to offer him the use of Dexter to replace a horse of his that has gone quite lame. That is, we began by loaning Dexter; later we had to recall him and send Molly, who was much too skittish and

imaginative for work on the seed drill here at home.

Chow has planted one land with carrots and beets, one with turnips and mangolds and one with corn, with pumpkins and squash among the rows. And every time he thinks of it, he harrows the soil that the early corn, celery and tomatoes will be planted in. The small garden stuff, peas, beans, chard, peppers, Brussels sprouts and all that will go in in another week.

The grape vines are not big enough to require all the space allotted to them, so I put citron among them. I did intend putting the cucumber vines right next these for convenience in watering with the hose but Nicky intervened in time.

"Didn't you know better'n that, really?" he asked in wonder.

"I don't yet."

"Gee! Why, everybody knows that bees mix cucumber and citron blossoms if they're close together. The cucs wouldn't be cucs, nor the citrons wouldn't be citrons."

"What would they be, Nicky?"

With dancing eyes he sized me up to see if I showed signs of being a real sport.

"You could just try them this once; then we'd know. Will you?"

"How much did your father make out of his cucumber patch last year?"

"Seventy-five dollars. It's in a book at home."

"Then don't you think the knowledge would be too expensive?"

"Yes," he sighed, "I guess you're going to need it all right, all you can make, an' maybe more."

Before Nicky left I saw him thoughtfully pick up a few seeds that I had dropped. One or two were cucumbers, one or two were citron and I know by the care with which they were stowed in his pocket that the question will be decided somewhere on the Worth farm this summer.

Plans for the picnic progress apace.

Beside the general arrangements that are being completed by the Essingtons, Rose has some side line plans of her own. Her hand is on the table now, the cards face up. In aid of her scheme that Captain Fenton be her especial attendant on that day she told him that she wished to see if Glossy couldn't beat Midnight on the ride there.

She also asked me to suggest to the Essingtons that it would be much cozier to take the lunch in baskets for two, each girl to provide one for herself and escort. She even went so far as to tell him that "they" were adopting the plan and asked him what he would like in their basket. He asked her to consult with me about it, by which I imagined that he had sent a S. O. S. call.

When, at Rose's request, I mentioned the subject to the Essingtons, they thought the idea too

silly for words, just as I had thought they would. We shall lunch "*en* party."

Rose also sounded C. F. as to my working costume.

"Do you care for girls who wear masculine clothes?" she asked him, supposing herself outside my hearing.

"That depends a bit on the girl, too."

"Oh, of course. But do you approve of the idea in general?"

"Can't say. But I've approved of it in particular once or twice."

The matter was settled. A wire order for a riding habit of the same colour as mine was sent to Spokane at once, and, in the meantime, she is busy making a tailored waist for it, copying mine exactly. This trivial incident has happened before. For one thing, she has changed her style of hairdressing to that which I affect.

I am not sure whether I resent this because of the ten dollars I paid that Frenchman to tell me how to build my hair to suit "ze contour of ze countenance of madame," or whether it is because the style becomes her better than it does me.

Be that as it may, I fully realise that I did not half appreciate your originality.

You cannot imagine how much better I feel when I have grumbled to you of my small troubles. So much so, usually, that I wish I hadn't done it.

The water motor was installed last week. It

does its work efficiently but looks unsightly and commercial in our romantic well-bower. Another of the jobs awaiting a slack season is the building of a rustic well house to cover it. Rose is enthusiastic over this and means to help "every minute."

The plumbing instructions arrived and I have taken the plunge and ordered the necessary pipes, fixtures, taps, wrenches and a gasolene torch. Even if I cannot manage it will be all right as I have been the nicest ever to Mr. Worth lately.

You should see the way the things in the hotbed grow these days. We can hardly keep ahead of them. Also the asparagus. There is enough for a meal every other day. I am so thankful that Rose likes these as well as I. I try to make the money that I get from the creamery for Betsy's cream buy the groceries. If Betsy can, with the aid of the garden, feed herself and me, then she was a very good buy.

I hear that Mrs. Good resents my neighbourly friendship with Peter much more than she does that with C. F. It seems it was a sister of hers that gave Peter the terrible idea of every woman as endowed with faculties of relentless pursuit.

I told Peter, one day, that we were to have tea and tennis on Saturday afternoons, and asked him to come. He denied either drinking tea or playing tennis, so I was amazed when, yesterday afternoon, just as we were settling to our tea and oatmeal cookies, I saw him coming across lots.

Betty saw him at the same instant.

"Oh, girls," she exclaimed slangily, "look who's here! Janet is certainly getting him civilised when he will walk right into the enemy in this fashion. We should really do our bit. Come on, let's beat it. That's the way Janet began."

Eleanor objected. Asked them not to be silly.

"Very well then, Eleanor. I was only thinking of your comfort. It will be so much easier to come along with the crowd than to stay behind and explain that we are paying for plums."

"But what of Janet," she objected. "It's not fair to ask her to explain such a thing."

"I sha'n't," I said, "I hate to lose you, but it may do good."

Peter was quite frank in remarking on their hasty leave.

"Yes," I said innocently; "for some reason they did leave suddenly."

I gave him tea and consolation, facilitated by Rose, who took C. F. to see whether a stone could have gotten into Glossy's foot.

You shall hear whether the picnic is a success. You did not say how you and M. P. are going to celebrate the holiday. Neither did you tell me what your ring is like, nor whether you have written any speeches as yet.

But anyhow,

Love

From JANET K.

Arcady, May the twenty-ninth.

DEAREST FRIEND:

The orchards, Nan. The orchards!

Across for miles they are like drifts of white and pink, and all the air is heavy with their fragrance.

Last week, here and there one saw a cherry or crab dressed in white—heralds of the solid regiments that were to follow.

Every place along this road, excepting mine, is a seasoned orchard, so mine is rather a break in the fragrant blanket of white. How wonderful when mine has grown up like the others; when I can stroll about, beneath my trees, with the soft June breezes raining petals on my head.

A few of my cherry trees had little pink buds, but at Saundy's advise I snipped them off, though sadly indeed.

At my home in Ontario, there was a huge cherry tree by the woodshed that was almost snowed under with bloom each year, but it did not seem one half so wonderful as the straight little trees with their one brave little cluster of buds.

I never before understood why Mother loved this tree so. It was the first thing they planted on the place, when they moved there, bride and

groom, and, after Father was gone, it was the cherry tree that brought his memory back the clearest.

My strawberries, at least, have bloomed profusely. They seem grateful for the digging and fertilising we have been doing lately. Saundy saw to it that all the blossoms were picked from my new plants. I hadn't intended mentioning them, for I do so want to see what kind of fruit they intend giving me, but he just picked them off without arguing about the matter at all.

I know you want to hear about the picnic. I meant to write you that night when everything was fresh in my mind and seemed worth telling about, but I spent the time, instead, in alcohol-rubbing and dosing Rose—but I am ahead of my tale.

For the ride to the picnic, I ordered a mount from the livery barn, asking for the best they had. The best proved to be none too good. When the Captain saw the big, rangy beast standing by the porch, he came over.

"Going to put on a cow-girl exhibition?" he asked.

"Why?" I enquired, startled.

"I notice you have ordered John Collins. He is used chiefly for this purpose."

"Oh, heavens! I merely ordered a horse. Asked for the best they had."

"You must have caught them with only one left,

then. Only then could they describe this one in that way. You will ride Midnight. I am a bit more acquainted with the moods and fancies of this beast."

Rose was much put out at this.

"But I wanted to have that race," she objected.

"To run your pony against Midnight, you mean?"

"Yes. I am sure she can win too. You promised to try it."

"Try it out with Miss Kirk, instead. John and I will be somewhere in the rear guard."

After which, strangely enough, the desire to win against Midnight was held admirably in check, and Glossy was allowed to fall back with the slower horses. Once she got a nasty bite from the amiable John Collins, who, aware that the tricks he had in stock for inexperienced riders would not "go," had to give vent to his disposition in some manner.

The official chaperones for the day were neighbours who live next Goods and opposite Captain Fenton—people that both he and the Essingtons knew in England—a Mr. and Mrs. Wilmont Mortimer-Deane. I had not met them before.

Both these might have ridden straight out of Park Row. There may be points of absurdity about Mortimer-Deane's farming; his riding outfit is flawless. Mrs. M. D. was the only woman who rode side-saddle. Her habit, top-hat, gloves and

all were from the very best London shops. With these she wore her inevitable feather ruff. She sees the humorous side of every situation, which, Cynthia says, is a faculty she very much needs in their present situation.

The ride across the wide, level flats was rather a race. Midnight and I reached the river in time to turn and watch the others come up. The Reclamation Farm is reached from there by means of a ferry, which is an affair that is wound across by hand. As is usual with such public ferries, the thing was swaying gently 'neath the interlacing cottonwoods at the other side of the Kootenay.

The canoe that was there for the convenience of those wishing to cross to bring it over was a tipsy-looking bark affair that showed that the ferry was used chiefly by Indians.

In the discussion as to who should cross for it, it was noticeable that while many of the men said "do let me go," none of them got in and went. There was plenty of river current to make one think a bit.

Finally Betty hit on the excellent idea of drawing lots for the honour—among the men, that is. The favour fell to Captain Fenton. Without a word he swung himself to Midnight's back and would have plunged him headlong into the river to swim for it had not Mortimer-Deane caught the bridle in time.

"Not for you, Fenton. I nursed you through

trench rheumatism once, but I've no time to do it again. Who came next, Betty?"

Captain Fenton said nothing, but, as Midnight gladly backed from the river's edge, I saw that his face was grim.

"It seems to me," Mrs. Mortimer-Deane said, examining the canoe, "that the man to take this out should be chosen on his swimming record."

Then the soldiers, who had joined us on the way, made a show of intending to take off their coats and swim in competition for her favour, and to decide who should paddle for the ferry.

How the matter would have been decided it is hard to say, but at this moment two Indians drove up and tied their team. With a scornful glance over our party they slid the canoe out, took their places and swung off. Paddling only a little, they let the stream carry them down, then came back up in the quiet water under the trees on the other side.

"Well!" the twinkling-eyed Irish sergeant exclaimed. "Who would have knew that it was as easy as that?"

Just as we were embarking, the remainder of the party, who had been asked to meet us at the ferry, came up. These last were two Miss Miltons, known as the "Goose Girls" from a goose farm that they run, and a civil engineer, short, bald and full of information.

The two girls I took to naturally, as they are

from Ontario—graduates of MacDonald in Guelph —and they know a lot of people that I know, not to mention having played the same games, hated the same school inspector and had the same young ambition—namely, to get out West. I find that, however much one may admire the English, the Irish, the Scotch or the Americans, one never feels at home with them to the same degree that one does with Canadians from one's own Province.

The engineer with them I took to artificially, for I saw that the history and mystery of the great undertaking that we were there to explore was as an open book to him.

Grateful for an audience, he showed me over the island, which is practically what the farm is, and explained that the high banks of the river had been dikes, many year's ago, built by the Government to demonstrate that the spring floods of the Kootenay—floods that rise almost overnight, when the snows of the mountains that border the river for a hundred miles back to its source melt with the first summer sun—might be controlled, and that the fertile soil of the vast areas of the river's flats might be used for agriculture, instead of lying under water for two months and idle the remainder of the time, as they had done—and do still.

He took Betty and me through the big barn, cobwebby and musty from years of disuse. Every known variety of farm implement was there,

rusted and coated with the same white river sediment that, on the outer walls, reached a height of eight or nine feet—the high water mark of the tragic flood of '92 that ended the experiment.

The house, a pretentious affair, apparently built for some agricultural pet of the Government, had its windows boarded with care. It seemed to have been left, blind and deserted, when its inmates—knowing that the Kootenay would soon tumble and swirl in over its dikes—had made their escape.

The matrimony vines over the porch had run wild, along with the orchard and the small fruit garden.

"How futile it all makes us poor mortals feel?" Betty sighed.

"Not at all; not at all." Our escort straightened himself to his full height. "You ladies should see the Roosevelt Dam, down our way. And the Arizona Desert, now that it has been taken in hand. Why, compared to this problem——" He waved his hand towards the surrounding scenery and left his sentence to finish itself.

"Why," exclaimed Betty, her eyes wide with a semblance of wonder, "you must be the very man the valley has awaited all these years!"

"All it needs is a big enough man. We've conquered the Panama, you know."

"You have a theory as to the solution of all

this, of course?" Betty said, demure to dangerousness.

"Why, that's all simple enough. One has only to understand the causes, and then to remove them. What is it that obstructs these spring floods from escaping in the river's regular channels? There the point lies, ladies. Remove this obstruction: remove it——"

"But," Betty argued, "the obstruction in this case appears to be the lay of the land. The Kootenay lake, into which this river empties a few miles farther down, is held in place by mountains that do not appear to be removable."

"The lake has an outlet. Deepen this. We did it on the Panama."

"And run the lake to some place where it isn't in the least bit welcome. Have you ever been at this outlet?"

"Well, no, I haven't. It is possible that no American engineer has looked the problem over. Americans, you know——"

"I think my sister is calling me," Betty said in haste.

"You came with the Milton girls?" I said, trying to keep my voice merely interested, not surprised. "Are you a relative of theirs?"

"Not at all. But I had a letter of introduction to them when I came here from a friend of mine—a moving picture manager who once put their goose-raising methods on the screen."

"Indeed! Do you mind if we hunt them up? I am more than interested in their undertaking. Much more," I added to myself.

We ate our lunch under a gnarled and unpruned crab tree, its blossoms just budding. The soft murmur of the water sifted through the cottonwoods and willows on the river's edge.

My memories of the lunch centre a great deal about a tweed-clad figure, lying full length, elbow resting on the clover; about quizzical eyes that sought mine for an amused instant whenever the combination of declamations of American ingenuity, on the one hand, and British immobility of countenance, on the part of the Essingtons and Mortimer-Deanes, on the other hand, became too irresistible; eyes that, in seeking mine each time, seemed to say "only we two see the humour of this."

The rest of the time, merely the consciousness of his presence, the innate strength of the man, his indifferent silence when he might easily have settled an argument with authoritative information; all of these I found compelling, and disturbing.

And I remember that the sky was its bluest, the hills clear-cut in the May sunshine and all the earth one's friend.

Both the Irish sergeant and I had brought our poles, creels and waders, so we escaped the dishes by promising enough fish for the crowd

for supper. The river was cold but I decided that I would be the last to come out. Besides, there had been wagers made as to who would reel in the greatest number.

The afternoon's programme was under discussion when Betty came down the bank to rinse the dish towels.

"Delmar goin' to take you round to show you the latest Reclamation idea?" the sergeant asked.

"You jolly well know he's not. Enough's enough. I did try to make Maude go. She asked him."

"Why not have him ride to the Mission with the rest of you?"

"Eve Milton and I had that all fixed. He was to have ridden John Collins. But Clay wouldn't stand for it. So it is up to some one to stay behind and listen to him."

When it became patent that the fish really intended to bite, Eleanor, Miss Milton and Captain Fenton took their cameras to a bend in the river to await a chance to catch us while reeling in, all agreeing that only then does an angler lose the look of conscious posing.

It was here that Rose, taking advantage of their wait, secured an imitation pole, and, in spite of warnings, walked out on a fallen tree over a deep spot, well in the foreground of the camera's view. In her anxiety to secure a good position

she ventured an inch too far. The tree swayed with her weight.

She toppled once or twice, recovered, then lost her balance completely. There was a scream, a splash—and the green current was flowing on as before.

I cannot remember who it was that ran out on the tree to be ready to pull her to safety. The Irish sergeant threw away an almost priceless pole and stood, his arms ready, thinking the stream would carry her straight to him.

It was Captain Fenton who first divined that she must be caught on a branch and unable to rise. Throwing his camera up the bank, he took a long, sure dive in her direction. He too was a long time in rising, but at last he emerged and handed Rose to waiting hands, still caught in a branch which he had had to break from the tree.

I think it must have been a picture that hung in my room as a child that was responsible for a fancy I have always had that the rescue of a maiden from drowning must be a very romantic and lovely sight. This picture, of Ophelia, dead and clothed in wonderful draperies, being lifted from the water by handsome Danish gallants, would foster such an hallucination.

However, we were so frantically glad to have Rose alive that we forgave her that, instead of being hauntingly alluring, she was a very cold, sputtering and hysterical girl. There was nothing

to do for them but to build a roaring fire and dry them. No one had extra skirts or petticoats to contribute. We wrapped Rose in saddle blankets till she began to steam.

For a moment I was alone with the Captain.

"That was wonderful, Claymore," I said. "I shudder to think what we would be doing now but for you."

"Thanks, Janet," he said, his face alight. "Not for the compliment but for the name. It's your first time, you know. I had given you up."

The afternoon's programme was resumed at last. Gaily the Irish sergeant piloted me back into those ice-cold waters, the others departed on their ride to the Indian Mission and Rose and Captain Fenton were left, cosily drying by the fire.

They dried their best for three hours but Rose was still damp in spots when the return ride was begun. Although wrapped in saddle-blankets till she looked exactly like a squaw, she was all but frozen when we reached home.

As quickly as possible, I got her between hot blankets on the Davenport before a roaring fire. It worried me terribly that she did not warm up even though I gave her boiling hot beef tea and rubbed her feet and hands.

At ten o'clock, the Captain called on the phone to enquire about my hospital. When I told him, I could hardly keep my teeth from chattering my-

self. He came over with a dose that smelled to high heaven, which he called a whiskey sling. He said he was going home to take one for himself, as he had not been able to get warm, either. I was sorry when he had gone that I had not asked for one for myself, but I had imagined that I would soon get to bed.

The whiskey sling did what I had not been able to do—it warmed Rose up. Also it loosed her tongue. She insisted that I stay up with her as she could not sleep—and did not want to, anyhow. She chattered hysterically till after two o'clock; all about Captain Fenton.

"Oh, Janet. Isn't he just too wonderful? Think of the things he's done; the places he's been; in the German Embassy; in the army in India—a Captain. Why, he knows half the nobility of England, and of lots of other countries. And to think——"

"Has Captain Fenton been bragging?" I asked drily.

I knew, of course, that he had not, but it nettled me that she had gotten information from him that I had not. I believe that Rose saw this, for she elaborated.

"He told me about his mother. She must be the sweetest thing. I hope to meet her some day. And about the snakes and the treacherous natives in India; and about how he would rather farm than live in a city in wealth and splendour. Of

course he wasn't bragging. I got most of this between the lines. I know that he must have met all sorts of wonderful girls, and to think——"

"He has," I interrupted; "particularly one Lady Edith, who decides such important things as what he should smoke for him."

"I'm sure he never saved her life," she said with a combination of smug complacency and worldly wisdom that her nurse found most exasperating.

Then she was off again; telling me that I could have no idea of how interesting he was when away from the others; no idea of his insight into human nature; no idea of how strong his arms had seemed as he had lifted her from the water——

Here the clock struck two and I rose abruptly.

"He may be all very well and all that," I said, "but he's not a tin god, nor a sufficient reason for an all night's rhapsody. Get some sleep if you can. I'm going to, anyhow."

Instead of the answer I was expecting to this, a look of satisfaction stole over her face, and, without further words, she settled for the night.

I wonder if it can be that I am jealous.

You have often heard me boast that I was born without that faculty. In fact, you have seen it proved in that I never minded that Lester Owen would have preferred you to me at the very slightest encouragement. And, as you know, I remained

calm in the face of your capturing one of the matrimonial prizes of the West.

But here it is, disturbing my equanimity to hear Rose's silly prattle about her rescue, and to think of the presence, in far-away England, of an Edith or two that I cannot find out anything about. No, I have no particulars of her as yet.

The day of the picnic, Mrs. Mortimer-Deane and I got quite chummy over the frying of the fish for supper, and she told me that she had known Clay since childhood.

"Then you have known Edith," I hazarded, as unconcernedly as possible.

"Rather. We were room-mates at school."

Not very illuminating, but all I got, there.

One day when Eleanor Essington was speaking of England and Captain Fenton's home, I risked an enquiry as to the Lady Edith.

"She isn't Lady Edith. She's Lady Harboro."

Losing my presence of mind, I quickly changed the conversation to subjects on which I might display less ignorance.

Peter, I find to my amazement, is much aggrieved that he was not included in the picnic crowd.

"I thought that you and I were friends," he said.

"And indeed we are. But it was the Essingtons that managed the excursion."

"What objection can they have to me?"

After a moment's hesitation I told him what they had heard.

"It takes a nice girl some little time to forget that sort of thing," I said.

Peter looked genuinely uncomfortable. I really believe his reform is near at hand.

This seems to be all
from JAN. this time.

Arcady, June the fifth.

My Dear Nan:

Has it ever occurred to you to meditate on the fact that different weeks, composed of the same number of days and hours, can vary so in length? I have been transplanting in the garden for one week; it seems like at least a month. We have set out the early corn, cabbage and cauliflower.

I wonder if I will ever get to be expert enough to keep up with Chow in planting. He goes so quickly that I cannot keep anywhere near him, even when he is religiously putting the cutworm poison of bran and Paris green about the roots, and I am slighting it, hoping that a cutworm will not find that especial plant, or deciding that, if my time is worth anything, I can replace a few plants and still be ahead.

Next week, the tomatoes and cucumbers go in, and after that the celery. Cutworms seem to have an especial fancy for tomatoes and cucumbers. In seasons when the pest is abundant they get a number of plants in spite of the poison. Other years they are scarcely noticeable and it is not worth while to trouble with preventatives. The trouble is, that foresight cannot be used, and after-knowledge is too late.

A genuine, bona-fide prophet in these parts could rake in fees like a corporation lawyer. For who would not pay well to have the summer accurately foretold? Some such advice as this, for instance:

No cutworms this year; save time and poison. Alberta and Washington potatoes a bumper crop; use land for tomatoes, which will bring top prices. Very little rainfall to be expected; get water on gardens early. Picklers and celery in special demand. Pork will repay for food given better than chickens. Watch for woolly aphis on trees and cabbage aphis in gardens. Store onions and cabbage for coming high prices in the spring.

But I suppose that a man who could give out prophecies of that nature would be commandeered by kings and things in Europe. As though their business was more important than ours!

I have at last discovered the flaw in Betsy. She is an offender of the worst type in the cow criminal code—a fence-breaker. Up to now, there has been nothing better than our own pasture hereabouts, so she was content to stay there, but early this last week she decided to scout about a bit. She opened the gate of the pasture, walked down and, after working about the lock of the big gate with her horns, got it open, too. Rose saw her but thought it all right.

Instead of going into Goods', as I would naturally have expected her to do, she went on a little

farther and opened the Mortimer-Deane gate with apparent ease. Once inside, she cropped off their early corn—newly transplanted but growing nicely—close to the earth. Not a single spear was left.

There is no more corn in Egypt. Captain Fenton has none. I have phoned to every greenhouse in the valley. None anywhere. Imagine my feelings when I had to go to Mortimer-Deane, as he came from town, and tell him of what the brute had done. I announced my intention of taking my own corn up and bringing it right over.

"Indeed," he said, "you'll do no such thing. Please think no more about it. It was certainly no fault of yours. I shall simply have to plant again."

I need scarcely say that, had he been furious and demanded an exorbitant sum, it would have been much easier for me. I asked Captain Fenton how much I ought to pay to repair the damages. He chuckled at the idea.

"I'd heaps rather it be you than me that asks Morty to take anything. He is proud as Lucifer, you know—and to let a woman pay money for damages her cow has done! Why, I don't imagine that a Mortimer-Deane has ever done such a thing—therefore, of course, he won't do it.

"Just the same," he went on, "I'm sorry about it. It will mean considerable loss, and, goodness knows, they need all they can make out of the garden. They get a little sometimes from the

aunt who controls the Mortimer-Deane estates as long as she lives. This aunt seems to have reversed the order and is growing younger instead of older. In the meantime, farming in Canada doesn't seem to be their forte."

"Will it be of any use for him to plant again?"

"Very little. Late corn will not help a great deal. You see, their place and Goods' is sand loam. This brings the garden crops earlier than we can possibly get them on our soil, so they get the early orders and the prices are always high then. Later, when our stuff is just coming in force, the heat will be drying his plants up. So, it is early or nothing for them, you see."

"Then, what in the world can I do?"

"I would suggest that you go to Mrs. Morty," he said. "Two women always have more sense than any other combination in matters of that kind."

So I did that.

At the gate an inspiration came to me.

"Mrs. Mortimer-Deane," I said, "Betsy has sent me to say how sorry she is for her depredations, and to ask if a quart of milk each day, and cream on Sundays, will recompense you for her destructiveness."

"Can Betsy really mean that?" she asked.

"Indeed, yes, she means it."

"Then tell her she is pardoned and that the Mortimer-Deanes are her friends."

She told me very frankly of how hard they found it to get along; of how tightly the aunt held the purse strings and of how well she took care of herself.

All of this frankness was quite un-Canadian, as was also the species of bravery she showed—for it really was bravery. A Canadian girl, in the same situation, I was thinking, would stir about and do something to aid the family finances. She seemed to divine my thoughts.

"Of course," she said, "I can't do a thing, even if there were anything I could do. She'd find out about it somehow and say that Wilmont couldn't support a wife, so, therefore shouldn't have one. Like as not she'd take me from him. She is that kind, if you know what I mean.

"She sent money pretty regularly till war broke out, but since then has felt terribly disgraced that he is not in France with the army. She believes nothing of what she hears of his frantic bombardment of the recruiting office here every new moon. Said she never heard of his bad heart on the polo fields."

"But, why," I asked, "does he not let her go hang—any Canadian man would, for that—and strike out for himself?"

"Goodness, my dear! You don't know what you are saying. That would be like a man, swimming to a life buoy and hardly able to make it, turning and swimming for mid-ocean, instead.

You see, he has been born, brought up and educated with no other idea than that some day he will run that estate. Roughing it in Canada was Aunt's idea after all this was finished. She happened to read a book of Haney's. Had it been a book on discovering North Poles, we would probably be up there now. She doesn't know that these things cannot be done without preparation and help.

"Sometimes I see your point of view and long to cut loose and tell her to go straight to, but Wilmont would never see it that way. He's in a rut of centuries. Here he is for tea at last."

And that is a fitting description of this wonderfully charming man. He is in a rut of centuries—and he will be there for tea at last.

As a suitable conclusion of this little incident, Betsy was dehorned by Saundy, and is a less handsome but better behaved cow.

I asked Mr. Worth why he had neglected to mention this trait of Betsy's when he was giving her a character. He said he just forgot it for the moment, but I am certain that he never, for a moment, forgot the damages he had had to pay to two or three neighbours for little calls made by Betsy. He was jolly glad to get seventy dollars for a hundred-dollar cow with a two-hundred-dollar fault.

As Rose did not want Glossy this afternoon, I saddled her and went for a canter. I took the

lower Canyon road and came out on the fork that leads to the Kootenay River, expecting to have a gallop across the flats. Instead, I came back the way I had gone. The flats are under water—a huge, far-reaching lake. It seems incredible that only last week we rode across the bottom of all that expanse. The tree tops of the cottonwoods that border the river are visible, marking the course that it usually takes, but the willows that grow in clusters over the flats are all under. I have made a sketch to show you how the hay fields of the Kootenay valley look in June.

When I returned, Rose and Captain Fenton had been walking. She wore her frilliest dress—has done ever since the day of the picnic, when the captain told her that the riding habits worn by all of us did not suit her type.

Personally, I thought her trim and rather cute in the rig but it would be of no use to tell her so now. No. When one has such a thing as a type it is a great mistake not to give it free rein.

I led Glossy up to the porch just as they sat down. I noticed that he was grave and rather tired-looking.

"Have you walked Claymore to death?" I asked, starting Glossy down to the brook for a drink.

Rose only smiled coyly and, when I looked at him, he said:

"Not at all. I'm far from dead, Miss Kirk."

Miss Kirk!

I went on into the house, half stunned, or perhaps half frozen would be more accurate. And why? Something had happened most recently for when I had consulted him about recompensing the Mortimer-Deanes he had called me Janet two or three times, and in a way that makes me love the name.

Since then I have gone through a dinner at the Essingtons'. In the general conversation no one but me noticed that Captain Fenton was unusually pre-occupied and silent. He was still so when he walked home with me—simply, I was sure, because he had done so on other evenings and it might attract attention if he did not.

Finally I recalled a method that had once set things right.

"Captain Fenton," I said, quaking inwardly, "there is some reason for your manner this evening, and this afternoon. Do you not think I have a right to ask what it is?"

After a moment's thought he shook his head.

"I'm sorry not to be as kind as you were when I asked that but—no, I can't tell you."

"Then how can I set it right?"

"It is all right now. Please believe that. I am sorry if I have let my manner bother you. It was thoughtless of me."

That was all I got—absolutely no clue as to

why I have suddenly been relegated to the status of "Miss Kirk" again.

Last night the moon on the fragrant fields was a witching and wonderful thing. To-night, the charm and lure of the hill and canyon, the river and fields is under a cloud.

Can it really be that I, the scoffer of sentiment, am writing things like that? Please do not apologise for rhapsodising about M. P.'s goodness and strength. Far be it from me to scoff. I imagine that the two should have stayed together. In union there seemed to be strength.

Must get some rest against next week's transplanting.

Ever yours,

JANET K.

Arcady, June the twelfth.

Dear Nan:

Am writing this on a most gorgeous June day. Have just returned from driving to church with the Essingtons. Later, they and the Mortimer-Deanes are coming here to dinner—a dinner of mountain brook trout.

Yesterday, I took a holiday from the garden and spent a vagabond day down there among the cool rocks, coming back in the evening with my creel full and heavy.

Saundy, who brings his scientific angling lore from Highland streams, gave me some flies of his own make, showing me the kind to use where the pools are green and deep, and those that the fish rise for where the rushing waters are white. My ears ring yet with the dynamic, high-water roar where the canyon walls are narrow, partly because, any time I listen, I can hear the sound at Arcady. The fishing will be easier and better in another month when the water is lower.

Beside the trout at dinner, there will be asparagus in butter sauce and French fried potatoes. Rose very generously offered to make a Charlotte Russe and angel cake. What do you think of that for a dinner, edited by two bachelor girls?

The whole thing is in the nature of an experiment on my part. I wish to see if those two families can get past a Sunday without their roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. If so, I shall immediately attempt to Canadianise them in other directions.

I invited Captain Fenton but he had promised to take dinner in town with a visiting Major. Even when Rose took both his hands and coaxed in her very prettiest manner, he still was adamant. However, she secured a promise to drop in later for some of her dessert so she does not regret her trouble.

As his refusal left a vacant place in our plans I decided to ask Peter, partly also to recompense him for his disappointment over the picnic. When I phoned he said he would find out and let me know. Later he called me up to say that he would be pleased to accept, as Mrs. Good had been kind enough to let him off this time.

Ye gods! Wasn't that just like a man.

There is no doubt but that she will "let him off," and no doubt in the wide world but that she will add that up in her score against me. This is merely another of the circumstances that seem to be bent on demonstrating that it is my intention to antagonise her. Why she thinks any one would be senseless enough to do that, I cannot see.

My friendship with the Mortimer-Deanes annoys her. "Birds of a feather flock together,"

she says. When I asked Captain Fenton what her objection to the harmless Mortimer-Deanes could possibly be, he said:

"Nothing could be simpler. You must have noticed yourself that Mrs. Morty sometimes hangs her wash out on Fridays. On another week it will be Tuesday, or even Saturday. It has been known to flaunt itself brazenly all day Sunday. Surely that is sufficient ground for reproach. What more could one want?"

More of the dinner later.

The weather this week has been ideal for transplanting,—moist and cloudy, with a great deal of rain. I cannot think of a greater delight than setting out plants in the rain; than seeing them lift up their thirsty heads and begin to grow, almost before one has one's hands off them. The rain on my clothes—I use an old raincoat made into an absurd smock—does not bother me nearly so much as does the sun on the back of my neck.

The tiredness I felt last week, the feeling that I would never get straightened up again, does not bother me now. I am garden-broke. Saundy had sympathised with me by humorously prophesying that the first six months would be the worst. I have lowered that record to the first six days.

Contact with Mother Earth, even in the form where it may be described as mud, has a wonderful effect on the nerves. In fact, it seems to eliminate them altogether. Also it seems incred-

ible that there ever was a time when I could not sleep, or, stranger still, when I hated to rise in the morning. At six at night I tumble from my muddy clothes into a Japanese kimono, read garden magazines for an hour or two after supper, then crawl into bed with a relish never felt before. From that instant I sleep soundly till the Canyon Mills whistle tells me it is six o'clock, when, incredible as it may seem to you, I am ready to get up, shake the soil from my garden clothes and get back to my work again.

Farming has already done me so much good that I long to pass its benefits along to others in need of them—Aunt Abigail for instance. I am sure she could not spend a week in a garden in the spring, with possibly one day off for fishing in a mountain stream, without getting a set of new and wholesome ideas; without having "the proprieties," as she describes whatever it is that she worships, shrink till they assume proper proportions.

Also Lily Hawtree. Nothing better than country life could be prescribed for her case. The year she shared an apartment with me, when we were on the Bulletin together, she was nothing but a bundle of tight-drawn, discordant nerves. Back again among the elemental things of life, she would not require a bromide to stop her brain machinery at night, nor strong coffee to start it again in the morning.

And often when, even across Peter's place, I hear the merry shouts of the Perry "Kewps," as I call them, I wish that every mother, worried and weary with the necessity of keeping her children dressed up to city requirements, could taste the freedom of putting them into overalls and turning them loose onto a few acres of God's earth somewhere. It is hard to say whether mothers or children would receive the greater benefit.

I must not neglect to mention that I am becoming really expert with my twenty-two. Extermination of the gopher pest is both the cause and the result of this. Sometimes I have hardly turned my back after setting in a plant, when I see a gopher sneaking up to nibble at it. Yesterday I got five of them with five shells: the record remains to be beaten. As Saundy prophesied, I can see no more reason for letting them get my plants on Sunday than on any other day.

There is a bud on my Margaret Dickson rose. I warned Saundy to leave it there on peril of his life. If it blooms in time I intend to wear it to the farewell dance to the soldiers—if I go. I think I told you that two officers had asked me to go, but I find that, as the Board of Trade is giving them a dinner the same night and they will have to parade from there to the hall, neither will be able to come for me. Unless some other invitation turns up in the meantime, Margaret Dickson and I will remain quietly at home.

Lo has been to visit me again. When I came from feeding the chickens one evening, he was in the yard admiring the colt.

"What you call him?" he asked.

"Mowitza."

"Huh," he nodded with his amiable grin. "Good name. Guess you keep him?"

"Yes, I think so."

"You buy two calves?"

"Heap cheap?"

"Sure. I sell you cheap all time. You good pay. Sometime maybe you sell me colt."

Did you ever in your life see such persistency? I am not at all certain but that he will get the colt from me yet. I went to the gate and inspected the calves in his waggon and ended by adding them to my herd.

The next day Saundy and I drove them, along with Betsy's William, back to the Arrow. I rode Molly, who hates a saddle to begin with, and who shook her head and switched her tail with violence at the indignity of being compelled to follow squirming, contrary-minded calves from side to side of the road, not to mention diving into the woods for them ever and anon. I resolved that any further purchases would be f.o.b. Arrow section.

Mr. Worth is pasturing two with mine while the flats are under water and Peter is going to drive some back, so that will help to pay my rent.

While on the subject of stock, let me say that I am becoming more and more enamoured of the kind of stock that Eleanor Essington goes in for—if one would put bees under the heading of stock.

Eleanor began, four years ago, with five hives and has expanded the business until now she has fifty hives on a slope behind the house and fifty more five miles back, quite near the Arrow, where the wild flowers are simply crying for bees to turn their sweetness into honey.

While the home bees are busy through the season on the orchards round about, visiting in their turn, the blossoms of the cherries, peaches, apples and plums, as well as the raspberries, currants, cucumbers and so forth of the garden, and the alsike clover and alfalfa of the fields, the wild flower bees, as they call those in the colonies back in the hills, will go through just as abundant a season among the willows, the nectar-laden Kanickinic, dandelions, wild spirea and finally the fireweed that grows densely on whatever wild land that has been visited by bush fires.

The wonderful part of it all is that while the bees are benefiting the fruit blossoms and the fruit blossoms are benefiting the bees, this amiable reciprocity costs the owner nothing, and he gets the ultimate benefit both going and coming.

Another point worth noting is that, even when one cannot supply them from one's own place, they are perfectly welcome to board on the farms

of the neighbours—a distinct advantage they enjoy over Betsy, the pigs or my snow white chicks.

I think I have my hands full enough for this summer, but next year, if I am still alive, bees it is.

After the planting, there will be a lull in the garden till strawberry time, although there is always hoeing and more hoeing to be done. But if Chow can handle it for a time I hope to get some plumbing done.

I have the duckiest blue and white linoleum to put on the floor of the bath and sanitary blue and white oilcloth for the walls. Once this is on I am sure it will be quite simple to set the furniture in place. Of course it must be connected up. When I get any qualms about that I think of how well the fireplace draws. I think I shall begin with the kitchen sink. It looks as simple as any. I have a water tank standing beside the kitchen stove, looking ever so wise; the cess-pool that Chow has been digging in the evenings, time and a half pay, is also ready for the venture—adventure would be better.

Later:

Our dinner was an unqualified success. Saundy came in the afternoon with a small pail full of mushrooms. He has been experimenting with the spawn for three years—never with any success till now. He was pleased as a child with his achievement. When I asked him to stay to

dinner with us he accepted gladly, not seeming to mind that it was an eleventh hour invitation. He fried the mushrooms as I could never have done.

We put the kitchen table, one from Rose's room and the reading table in line, cornerwise of the living-room. Of course I had to wash silver and dishes between courses but that only made more fun. Mortimer-Deane's imitation of an English butler as he waited on table was too funny for words. My English guests professed absolute satisfaction with a fish dinner. Rose and I felt more than gratified at their praise.

When they took leave Peter escorted the Essingtons, in spite of firm protestations from every one of them.

"Really, *please* don't," Eleanor remonstrated. "We'd heaps rather not trouble you."

Quite unheeding of their protestations, he determinedly took Eleanor's knitting bag and went with them. I hope he is not over-sensitive, for Betty is apt to consider this a suitable occasion for an application of "the truth."

Captain Fenton came soon after they had gone and Rose fed him bountifully with some of the dessert that she had cached for the purpose. She was in high spirits and took the entertainment of our guest into her hands, insisting on lighting his cigarettes and playing and singing her prettiest songs for him.

Although he smoked in silence he seemed contented with it all, but when it got to where she called him a great, big, wonderful man, I had had enough. I said I had letters to write and would they mind being chaperoned from the next room.

Rose explained my case.

"She's disconsolate, poor dear, because Peter felt that he ought to take the Esses home."

"Peter! He was here?"

"Of course," she laughed.: "Peter's stock is away above par hereabouts. You and I may have to take to the road for a chance to talk soon."

At this I left. The Captain stood while I gathered my writing things and magazines. His eyes seemed intensely inquiring as he said goodnight.

I feel like an aged and lonely aunt as I listen to her endless chatter, which gets tangled up in my letter so that I cannot think what I wanted to write and might as well stop.

Am mailing you six pounds of asparagus and a few of my special radishes. Tell me if you do not think them better than those, "so likee wood," Chow says, that we got in Fort Weyne.

Also, I think there will be a pair of chickens big enough for a fry by the time your birthday arrives, so I shall send them along. The chickens are growing rapidly and I shall soon have to turn over a part of the stable for sleeping accommodations as I do not want to build any more space

for them. Next year I shall not have so many, unless feed is cheaper.

A very important-looking man came the other day and said he had been told that I was the most extensive aviculturist in the district. I kept my head and did not deny this, and it finally dawned on me that he was alluding to my keeping chickens. He gave me an order for five dozen a week to begin the minute they are ready for shipping; wants them for use on the lake boats. I feel glad to have such a ready market, and the price—twenty cents, live weight, crated f.o.b. siding—is good, considering that I shall escape the tedium of dressing them.

Your devoted

JANET—aviculturist.

Arcady, June the nineteenth.

Dear Nan:

The strawberry season is imminent in the Kootenay valley. Every one is preparing for the rush of work and securing pickers wherever possible. Later, for the raspberry crop, this is an easier matter, for the high school students from the neighbouring towns are available then. Now they are all cramming for exams. In seasons when the crop is heavy and help scarce, it is necessary to resort to Indian pickers, but this is avoided if possible, and, in any case, is never advertised. As my crop will be very light, compared with the others, I am farming Chow out to neighbours in need. He is to assist Captain Fenton's Chinaman in the morning and go to the Mortimer-Deanes' in the afternoon throughout the season.

On an afternoon of this last week, when I had gotten my courage up to boring a hole in the kitchen floor preparatory to setting in the trap of the sink, I heard, from far up the road, a weird noise—a sort of roar, increasing in rapid crescendo.

I hurried to my front porch and saw that all the neighbours were on theirs. The equipages that pass to and fro on this road are usually quiet and orderly and uninteresting.

What I saw resolved itself into a motorcycle, followed by a cloud of dust. Up over a small hill it sped and dipped out of sight again. When it reappeared I made out two riders, clothed like pictures of military dispatch riders or something terribly important. As you may imagine, it gave me a start when, with a wide swing, they entered the open gate of Arcady, rounded the drive and, not deigning to notice that I stood on the porch steps, swept by me, stopping the machine finally by the simple device of running it into my small but symmetrical hay-stack.

You may be sure that, as I followed this apparition to the barn, I wondered what I was in for. However, it turned out to be nothing more formidable than Eve Milton that took off goggles that would have been a credit to a deep-sea diver and mopped a moist brow. Her sister, Mary, after extricating the jaunty red motorcycle from the hay, followed suit, complaining.

"Why didn't you stop by the porch, Eve. This informality borders on familiarity when this is a first call."

"But I forgot how *to* stop it. That curve in the drive tangled me. You never even mention how well I did that. How do you do, Miss Kirk! I suppose we should apologise for startling you in this manner, but as you are responsible for the whole thing——"

"I am glad to see you," I said, "but as to being responsible for the noise that you made——"

"No. It shouldn't roar like that. It is allowed so much racket, which is enough, goodness knows. I must look in the book again. The mixture may not be right."

"Isn't that spraying that you are speaking of?" Mary asked mildly.

"No, I am not. But as I said, Miss Kirk, you are responsible for the undertaking on our part. We have wanted a motorcycle for two years, but not until we saw your working uniform did we get the courage to get one, together with suitable clothes to ride in. How do you like us?"

"Immensely," I said as they turned about, exhibiting suits that looked like dust-coloured aviation rigs. "You look to be equipped for the high air, the deep sea or anything that goes between."

"'Anything that goes' is good," Eve said. "We got up to fifty twice coming here. Mary threatened to shriek her head off if I didn't go slow till I had learned to steer.

"Oh, how heavenly!" she went on. "You have a tennis court. We are spoiling for a game. And just think. It only takes us thirteen minutes to get here. I timed it, and I think I could get it down to ten if I could shake Mary."

"We'll have a game," I said, leading the way into the house, "after we have had tea. Rose will

be home then. And you must come again on Saturday. We are making up partners for a tournament then. Would you care to bring your friend, Mr. Delmar?"

After a moment's hesitation Eve, usually the spokesman, said, "If it's all the same to you, we'd *love* not to."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed. "I thought he was supposed to be—er—fond of geese."

"He seems to be. After he has proposed to me once more, the odds will be even; twice each. But I am sure that he doesn't play tennis——"

"Why, Eve!" Mary exclaimed. "You know he said that back in——"

"—this time, I was going to say, Mary."

Before they left they inspected my chickens, admired my home-made hoppers and the general yard arrangements. I told them of the visitor who had pronounced me an "extensive aviculturist."

"Aw well, say," remonstrated Mary in a funny little mournful manner she has. "That's not fair. Here our birds weigh five times what yours do and we've twice as many, and all we ever get is 'goose girls.' "

Before they left the Essingtons came down for tennis so it was six o'clock by the time the nine of us bent our energies and ignorance to the task of making that obstinate red motor run. But at last they were off, with great sputtering and roar-

ing and waved a farewell through their sunset-tinted cloud of dust.

Betty commented on the fact that their uniform seemed to suit their type and said she had heard of several other girls who were going to adopt one somewhat similar. She said that when they saw how smart my other clothes were they thought that the working suit must, perforce, be smart also. Personally, I think that they all see what a splendid protection the leggings or puttees will be against the mosquitoes, and once they have discarded skirts for outdoor work I am sure they will never consent to wear them again.

Rose, who was the only one in the group in frills, said that Mrs. Good had asked her what the womanhood of the country was coming to.

"The most of us are coming to work," said Betty, "and we cheerfully admit the disgracefulness of that."

Two invitations I have received that I look forward to with keen pleasure. One is to spend an afternoon with the Goose Girls on their place; the other is to spend next Sunday with Saundy up at the station. The latter I look on as an adventure. Mountain climbing has always held a sort of charm for me. Goat Mountain cannot be climbed all the way from the back of my place, but there is a trail that leads from the back of Essingtons' and winds to the top in a spiral

course. I shall take that. I hope the day will be fine.

Much as I am interested in Arcady, I find it hard to stay at work these days, the call of the wild is so insistent. The syringa and spirea that grow wild in great profusion all about are coming white on all the hills, and mixed with them are sweet wild roses everywhere. These, climbing over rocks and filling glades, are bravely challenging the stereotyped beauty of the orchards.

Yesterday we had some splendid games and arranged partners for the summer's tournament. Mortimer-Deane is my partner in the mixed doubles and Cynthia Essington in ladies' doubles. Norine Essington and Mary Milton elected to be partners, saying that they stood a good chance at the prize, both being musical. Rose then asked Maude Essington to go in with her, as their combination of good looks should be irresistible. At this Betty exclaimed:

"Come on, Mrs. Morty; you and I. As we are by all means the best players, I don't see why we shouldn't stand a show."

"Well, you will see," the Captain said, "when I get the handicaps fixed up."

"This club is a democracy," Betty objected. "There should be no handicaps."

I played into Rose's hand and saw to it that she was cast to play with Captain Fenton. She did not at all suspect me of deep-dyed villainy in this,

and my conscience was easy when I remembered her motto: that old one that tells wherein all is fair.

Last night, after they had gone and I had cleared up after the tea, Peter came to inquire again about Mowitza. Rose came from her room at once, made him feel at home, then said:

"I am going to phone for Captain Fenton and we'll have a game of bridge."

This, in spite of the fact that she knows that I loathe bridge. Not content with this, she utilised the time we spent in waiting for the Captain in making arrangements for me to teach Peter the pleasant game of tennis. Thoughtful soul, isn't she?

With a perfectly grave face, C. F. professed ignorance of any game but penny-ante and pinochle, and let Rose proceed to teach him. She did this with great sweetness and patience and was so intent on her job that she did not notice when he set her right on two or three points of the instruction.

Then, when the game was finished, he gathered in the cards and showed us tricks that make me gasp yet; things I had not thought a magician could do. He explained how, during his army life in India, there had been times—days at a stretch—when there was nothing to do but play cards. In these times of monotony they would hire a native Magi and take turns at offering him gold to dis-

close his tricks. He promised to show us other magic on some evening, even to the extent of charming a cobra, if we could procure one for him.

Then Rose made cocoa, calling Captain Fenton to help her to butter bread. Once, on entering, I heard her ask him if he didn't think it was getting serious when I was going to teach Peter tennis.

Rose has been working on a pink mull frock for the dance. It is very sweet. She asked me this morning what I should wear. I told her that as I was not even sure of going I had not worried about clothes for it. Her eyes hardly bore out her spoken hopes that I would be there. I rather think the Captain has asked her to go with him, as there seems to be no other reason for the air of elated satisfaction she carries about.

I have canned ten pints of asparagus against the frosts of winter. Strawberry jam will be the next on the summer's canning programme.

Yours much the same as ever,

JANET K.

Later: Captain Fenton phoned to say that he will call for us with a car on the night of the dance, so I shall be going after all. J.

Arcady, June twenty-six.

Dear Nan:

Knowing that you are anxious for particulars of our dance, I am mailing you the local paper. This goes into detail in a manner that I could not approach. The "sussiety" editor has excelled himself—note the descriptions of the costumes. Wherever Mrs. So and So is described as looking handsome in black and white, know that she wore a dark skirt and white waist. People here very sensibly go and have a good time in what they have.

Some of the costumes of the older women had been made for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. By a virtue of sheer elaborateness they held their own, in spite of the abundant evidence that was present that since that time skirts had been both very long and very short, very wide and very narrow.

Mrs. Mortimer-Deane's gown of black sequins had a train that proclaimed it as grandeur of a rosier era.

As for me, I unearthed that gold net over cloth-of-gold that I got at Yvette's and wore once in Winnipeg. Rose threw her pink into a corner when she saw it and declared she would not go a

step. Why had I not told her I should wear a London model that would put hers in the shade? If she had known that I would play such a trick on her, she wouldn't have let the Captain ask me to go at all. This statement did not terrorise me, for I knew that she had told him that the Lieutenant was coming for me and that he had found out the reverse for himself.

However, I pacified her with the loan of my silver slippers and stockings, and the silver Sumuroon girdle from India. She looked very youthful and nice. Beside her simplicity the gold looked a bit sophisticated. However.

Captain Fenton did not dance, of course, but he kept soldiers and others about so that Rose and I were busy. He looked, if possible, more gorgeous in a dress suit than he does on horseback. He told me that I was the only bit of New York present, but that, from an Englishman, is not at all certain to be a compliment. In fact any tendency he has felt towards complimenting me of late has been held in admirable restraint.

At twelve o'clock they varied the programme by a number of speeches of farewell and Godspeed to the departing men. Mrs. Essington, naturally a good speaker, made much the best one. Her words came straight from the heart of a mother of fighting men.

After this there were tableaux on the stage of the hall,—tableaux representing the different ele-

ments of the army, posed by soldiers and others and exhibited in spot-light from the moving picture machine at the back of the hall.

Two or three English regiments were represented in their red coats of their dress parade regalia. These were very colourful and effective. Peter was a very splendid Highlander in full Gordon tartans. C. F. was an Indian officer in the sun hat and uniform of that climate. All the various Canadian elements, even to a cavalryman on his horse, were given an enthusiastic reception. For the final picture of these the curtain said:

"Here's to the new recruit."

Then slowly the new recruit was revealed, standing at awkward salute. It was Johnny Good. The house rocked with applause. The soldiers gave three cheers and three again, the civilians joining them heartily.

The enthusiasm was carried into the last scene, where, from the imitation prows of two battleships, a British tar and an American sailor joined hands under their respective flags while we sang, in honour of America's entrance into the war, the two national anthems and every nautical song we knew.

Rose endeavoured to get Peter to join us at supper but he ensconsed his "hieland" finery among the Essingtons and did not even look our way.

The Irish sergeant rode home with us so as to take the car back to town. From him I learned that Johnny Good's cleverness in picking out the psychological moment in volunteering was somewhat due to his friends, most of whom were in uniform. They had it properly figured out that after an ovation of that kind he would naturally wish to sign on, and for that reason asked him to help them out by impersonating a new recruit as they were short-handed.

"Why," I said, "I think you are perfectly terrible."

"Merely kind," he corrected. "Did you notice how much happier he looked than he has for months? We simply caught him away from his mother. No, it wasn't coercion at all. He himself suggested signing on. But of course it is only decent not to let this out. He will march away covered with honour, and I know," he added generously, "that he will march back in the same way."

When, on the following day, the trainload of soldier boys pulled out, pulling so many heart-strings, Johnny Good's seat was piled as high as any with gifts and many of the cheers that went up from the crowd were all for him. As the train moved off there was a light in his eyes that I shall never forget.

I hate to sadden this tale by telling you that Mrs. Good was so furious that she could not keep

quiet about this episode, so she dimmed the glory of her son's departure by just that much. And she actually blames me for the whole thing.

"Of course," she said, "she was at the bottom of it. I had not talked to her for ten minutes when she asked me why he did not enlist."

"Ah, weel," as Saundy says.

I got six cups from the strawberry patch yesterday. We have had them with heaps of Betsy's cream twice daily all week. Yesterday, when I got all of six, Rose exclaimed:

"Oh, do let me make a pie for the poor Captain!" adding brightly, "and I'll make one for you to give to Peter and you need never tell him that I made it."

"Or," I suggested soberly, "*you* make one for Peter and let *me* give Captain Fenton one and not say who made it."

Needless to say, her plan was the one she adopted. Then she was astonished that I refused to carry a pie to Peter, and when, after she had declared her intention of being my messenger, I ate a piece out of it, she was too furious for words. She took C. F.'s pie into her room for fear I should be moved to sample it and did not even vouchsafe a smile at my peals of merriment over the matter. I hope, Nan, that you have made M. P. pass the most rigorous tests of his sense of humour. Living with one who is without this fac-

ulty makes one sympathise with General Sherman in a famous definition he made.

During this last week I had an inspiration and followed it up by going to the fruit growers and offering to take my team and waggon and collect the berries from this road and the Canyon road and ship them at the station. I have practically none of my own and it seemed to me an economic waste, when every one is so pressed for time, for every farmer to take his time and his team's time for that period every day when one might do it.

The train is due at the siding at twelve thirty, which meant that every man left home at the awkward hour of twelve. This would not be so bad if the train was sure to come at that hour, but it is as apt as not to be one or two hours late, due to waiting at the landing for the Kootenay lake boat. This boat, in berry season, is obliged to call at the ranches along the shores of the lake whenever they float a white flag, so it is a pretty safe bet that it will be late. So, you see, it is not possible to be home again before two.

They are all delighted with my idea and I find myself quite popular. I said that each might pay me what he thought it worth, and, as many seemed to hesitate to offer me money, I have acquired a varied assortment.

The Essingtons' donation was a hive of bees. Now I am an apiarist also, if you please. The Mortimer-Deanes contributed a gorgeous silk

Union Jack that I had coveted. It flies from a flag-pole, announcing Arcady's patriotism this very minute. Mr. Good, who is quite a carpenter, is making me a butter-mixer like the one I saw at the Agricultural College. I gave him the plans and he is going to make one for Mrs. Good also. I doubt its success at working butter over there.

Peter has given me a pig. Was not that romantic of him? However, I could truthfully tell him that it was exactly what I wanted. The MacAllisters down the Canyon road have a calf that I can have if I want it but it looks to me as though it has ringworm. If so, I would never dare to drive it back among my beauties at the Arrow.

Captain Fenton sent over a wonderful black bearskin that I had especially admired the day I had tea there. The skin is of a bear he himself shot on the place in earlier days and the head is mounted—its expression most ferocious. It reposes on my cedar chest making it a thing of beauty.

And Mr. Worth, who, glory be! had never heard of a book on plumbing but worked at it all his life before coming here, is going to connect up my bath and kitchen fixtures with the water motor and cesspool the minute the berries are over. I had thought of asking him for Nicky but this is really better.

So M. P. is going to buy you a Chummy Roadster for a wedding present. Good for him. Good

for you. Good for me. What about the house? That place of his is unhandy to work in and cold in winter. I feel that I can leave the matter in your hands now.

Yours as ever,

JANET KIRK.

Arcady, July the third.

Dear Nan:

It is raining to-day. Playful but thorough-going showers are chasing each other from hill to hill. Away across, the wide waters of the flats are mottled with their shadows. At one spot a grey shower almost blurs the view, while just behind it shafts of sunlight stir the greens and blues of the water and bring the colourful surface into high relief.

Tuesday it rained all day. Showers are not so welcome in strawberry season for when ripe berries have been rained on they are unfit for shipping. Most people make jam of these as they are all right if used at once.

The next day was fine again but there was almost no shipping to be done. As Peter wanted to meet the train anyhow, he offered to take my team and collect the cream cans, so I seized the chance of a day off to make my promised visit to Saundy.

Making an early start to avoid the heat, I set out with a few magazines and some home-made candy for Saundy's sweet tooth slung in a knapsack on my back. What a trip it was! The old trail is almost overgrown in many places with the

syringa and roses. Fancy fighting one's way through drifts of summer fragrance!

Then, higher up, the trail winds among dense growths of Jack pine, the summer sun stirring its pungent and resinous odour. I was soon around the curve of the hill and shut off from all signs of the habitations of men, where only an occasional sound of wild life disturbed the monumental silence all about and where hill after hill sent back a friendly echo to my call.

I tried to realise that I was treading in the paths of dead romance. I tried to imagine what hopes had led the early prospectors to build those little bridges over the mountain streamways, to blast the little trails round the curved rock surfaces of the mountain side; tried to visualise the pack-trains of laden mules that had wound upward to the silver lead prospects where many men had been lured to spend their best years.

Often I have wondered why I was not born earlier and placed in this country in the days of real pioneering: before the flavour and savour of civilisation had encroached even into the mountain fastnesses. I am thrilled and spellbound when Saundy tells of days when, with a mirror, he used the sun's rays and the telegraphic code to flash messages to a friend on another hillside prospect ten miles away: when two fires instead of one on Friday night indicated whether or not they

would be down for a glass and a game at Bob's Place.

I reached Saundy's cabin in time to have noonday dinner with him. His surprise was too funny for words.

"And it's not every day you can surprise Saundy with your doings, either," he said. "I was just about to telephone to see whether or no you were ill, seein' as Peter has your route the day."

"Saundy! How on earth do you know Peter has my job to-day?"

"I'll be telling you that when you tell me what was in that parcel the good-looking expressman gave you yesterday."

"Those delicious McWhill's chocolates are none of your business, even if I did save a few to bring up to you, but how——?"

"And it was a great laugh I had at the bunch of girls that could not start a new-fangled bicycle."

"I know," I said. "It's your telescope. It must be a good one. I want to look the minute I've eaten. As to the present, I did not breakfast against a long mountain climb, so I am starving. Give me a real, old-time prospector's meal."

This he did. Ham and eggs and flapjacks, with the second course the same, and coffee that was ambrosia in spite of condensed cream. And while we ate, two white tail deer that he feeds every day came and looked in at the window, crowding

each other good-naturedly. I almost wept that my camera was down on the bookcase in Arcady. Saundy thinks a great deal of his pets and can hardly remain calm when he thinks that they are likely to be shot as a reward for their trusting him, as soon as the season opens and untrustworthy men with guns come up on the hills.

I wondered that he did not bring his dog up for company but he explained that neither dogs nor cats can tolerate the rare atmosphere of the hilltops. Before they get used to it they take a fit and have to be shot. When my nose had bled the second time I inquired with some concern whether he thought he would have to do the same with me.

Then I looked through his powerful telescope and found out how he knows so much of the valley's business. I could see Rose playing with the children in the noon hour, and Mrs. McAllister spanked her Bobby right in plain sight. I was quite surprised to hear no noise about it. I could even see a tiny speck, probably a motor boat, moving on the Kootenay where it crosses the border into the state of Idaho. And how it worried Saundy and me that we could not make out who it was that had the widow MacNee out in a canoe on the flats!

A telephone connects Saundy's station with the office of the fire warden so it is possible to have men on the way to a fire a few minutes after it has

started. The amount of money saved to the Government and mill owners through this station is inestimable. Also, beside locating the fire, Saundy often has a pretty good idea of what campers or other persons are responsible for its origin.

"But you would need a witness," I said, "in order to indict any one."

"Saundy's word has never needed a witness in this valley," he answered with some pride.

Saundy walked down with me as far as his claim. I could see by his eyes that it is the love of his life at present; I wondered if he had ever had any other. He took me into his tunnel, which fascinated me as nothing else had done on that day of fascination. We would have gone down in the shaft but that it was half full of water. He explained the mining laws about working claims. He has done what is necessary to hold his claim, and added enough to know that he has a good vein of ore that he tried to show me was of excellent quality.

"And when will you make your fortune?" I asked.

"After the big mines have run out I guess," he answered. "You see, it takes capital to develop a mine after the ore is found. One or two companies have looked the prospects over with a view to buying the hill. They will, some day—the ore is here—but it will not be in my time."

"But think," I said, "of the surprise of your Scottish heirs at the wealth that Saundy has left them."

"I have no heirs," he answered sadly. "There were three bonny nephews, all anxious to come to me in Canada, but the war came first. One, a sailor, went down when Lord Kitchener did. The other two will not come back from France."

Suddenly realising that I could not speak, I gave him my hand, which he gripped in silence, and left him there, a sad but valiant figure, the last of a valiant line, thousands of miles from his native highlands. The picture seemed more pathetic in that the rewards of his best years would come at last—to some one for whom he cared nothing. When, at a bend in the trail, I looked back, he waved his hat as he started back to his lonesome hilltop vigil and I knew that he understood, even though I had not been able to thank him for his hospitality.

It was after six when, at last, my weary feet got me back to Arcady. Rose had taken pains to cook me a good dinner but I was so tired that I did not dare to eat. I told Chow to wash the dishes when he had milked, dumped myself into the hammock on the porch and was soon fast asleep.

I was awakened at eight o'clock by Captain Fenton's step on the porch. Rose has trained him to stretch his length along the wide porch-rail

while she swings in the hammock, so I imagined that he thought it her this time.

"Shall I call Rose?" I asked.

"No. Sit still. I want to smoke in peace."

I slid down and almost went to sleep again.

"I didn't mean it quite so literally," he said. "Tell me about Saundy."

So I gave him Saundy's messages and told him of my dinner, the deer and the views per telescope.

"If I could," I said, "I'd try to tell you of the beauty of that mountain trail. It will haunt me always. It made me almost intoxicated with delight and sad and depressed both at one time."

"I know. I've felt that too," he said. "Why is it?"

"I thought it because I had no one with which to share it all. With an understanding soul a walk like that would be heaven. Alone, it is all the more lonely for its beauty."

"Yes," he said at length. "I dare say that might be the reason. I have a small share in a claim up there and used the trail a great deal before I went away. Somehow I always returned dissatisfied and unsettled. Probably I was, as you say, mourning for my kindred soul." Here his eyes became quizzical. "You know, I brought from India a native belief that she was somewhere, waiting for me to come and find her."

"Then, afterward, you found her?" I wondered at my own daring.

"If I did, it was too late."

I waited but got no more. His eyes had gone from quizzical to sombre. How I longed to tear aside the curtain of his reticence and ask question after question about this Miss Edith, Lady Harboro. But something told me that the conversation had better take a lighter vein.

"Remembering that Saundy particularly asked me to tell you how glad he would be to see you, I suggest that we take next Sunday dinner there. Perhaps we might console each other for these kindred spirits that elude us so diligently in the mountains. The flowers will be out yet next week. Shall we?"

It was long before he answered.

"Saundy should know," he said, "that I cannot climb hills any more, and you should know that, for much the same reason, I cannot aspire to be either a companion of dreams or a consolation for their absence."

Here Rose came out, expressed regret at not knowing the Captain was waiting, scolded him for waking me and bewailed the fact that she was two half days out on her yearly reports.

"I'll just bring them into the fresh air," she said. "It may clear my head."

"Then," Captain Fenton said, "we'll go over

to Morty's so as not to disturb you. Are you too tired to walk it?" This to me.

"First, I'll need the supper Rose so kindly left for me."

I think that Rose would have come too, reports or no, but that the Captain said farewell in a jokingly final manner. She withdrew to her two half days a little wonderingly. I wondered too. He had not expressed a desire for my exclusive company for some weeks.

His thoughts must have followed mine to Rose for, having lighted his pipe, he threw the match at a late gopher and said:

"Do you never get tired of constant and continual chatter?"

"Chatter? You mean Rose? I thought it all amused you. You've *seemed* appreciative."

"Amused? Well, perhaps, sometimes. But amusement is not all one demands in a living companion, is it?"

"A living companion! For me, you mean?"

"Certainly," he snapped.

Here I decided that, even if I have none of the mid-Victorian virtues, I need have none of its vices. Anyhow, I suddenly felt light-hearted enough to be generous to any one.

"Rose is congenial in heaps of ways," I said warmly. "Few girls would have troubled to have the warm meal ready for me that she did to-night."

He smoked in silence for a time. We were away past the Mortimer-Deane gate.

"You are a great deal more generous than she would be," he said at length.

That set me wondering. What had the little puss been saying? My thoughts wandered back to the time when he had called me "Miss Kirk" so stiffly after having talked to her. What had she told him? Only once had I given her even a straw to build on. She must have used it to the fullest advantage.

"Look here," I said, sitting on the rail of a little culvert on the Canyon road. "Tell me this. Supposing that it was two o'clock in the morning, you were dead tired and longing to get to sleep after having rubbed a patient from chill to warmth; supposing this patient insisted on extolling to heaven the wonders of the man who had saved her life—I almost said 'and made this bother necessary'—wouldn't *you* say that that man might be all very well but he wasn't a tin god, so go to sleep? Wouldn't you?"

"I should never put it as mild as that," he said. "But neither should I say he thought he was."

"She *didn't* put it that way."

"I see now," he went on, "that I should have paid no attention to such remarks. They came so fast that I soon learned. We will forget it all, that is, if you will accept my apologies for any seeming rudeness on my part. I would not have

felt that it was right or necessary to mention that she has misconstrued facts, to me and to others, except that it may influence you about her staying on."

"Staying on—how do you mean?"

"She hasn't mentioned doing so?"

"Not as yet."

"It is odd that she should have mentioned it to me first. But here is your gate. I will say good-night as you are tired."

Tired I may have been as I went up my Arcadian driveway, but I noticed that the moon was bright again on all the hills and fields; that its beams were stirred together with the faint afterglow that lingers among the hills, long after the red of the setting sun has died away.

Friday evening, after school, Rose broached the subject of remaining with me through the holidays; said she had nowhere she especially wanted to go and that the work at her own home was very tiresome. I had said nothing of what the Captain had told me, thinking that as we were going to part so soon we might as well do so in peace. But this was different.

"You know," she said, "I've always tried to make myself useful."

"Yes indeed, you've really done more than you ought."

"I should love to work on a farm for the summer."

"I fear," I said, "that this work would not suit your type."

"I know, but it's so patriotic. I had a letter from a girl in Toronto and she says it is all the thing to do—going out on farms, you know."

"Why not try Mrs. Good? She needs another berry hand. I have really no more than Chow and I can manage."

No, she wouldn't like Mrs. Good. Then Mrs. Mortimer-Deane. Heavens, no! Not her. In fact she didn't want to stay anywhere but just where she was and wasn't I flattered at that?

"Then," I said, "put it this way. If you have always and at all times been absolutely square with me, you may stay."

"Square? Why, what do you mean?"

I did not answer but waited for my meaning to dawn on her.

When it did, she got up and went to her room at the door of which she turned with this four-year-old remark:

"If that is what he is like, you can have him."

She packed up noisily and emphatically and took my original advice about going to Goods'. Later in the evening I saw her, in a borrowed apron and sunbonnet, out in the berry patch with Mrs. Good. The fact that my ears were not burning shows that all signs fail at times.

I must stop now and get the hose going in the

little irrigation system I have in the cucumber patch.

As soon as Nicky sees me there he will be over for he thinks it all great sport. The other day, he asked:

"Why is it that you seem to be playing when you are gardening, when every one else thinks they are working so hard?"

"Because I like it all so well, I suppose, Nicky."

"Well, your garden looks as well as any, 'n better too, *I* think. Why doesn't every one play?"

I am wondering how to either face or sidestep his enquiry as to why Rose is at Mrs. Goods'. I rather think I may hint that he get her version of the move.

As I said: the cucumber patch.

Yours as ever,

JAN.

Arcady, July the tenth.

Dear Nan:

Remembering that you were pleased to scoff at my statement that Arcady fronts on the National Automobile Highway, let me say that a man passed here yesterday on his way from Halifax to Vancouver.

He had backed his machine into the Atlantic before starting and means to run it right down into English Bay when he reaches the Pacific. He had Halifax air still in one of his tires. I am sure that, had you been here, you would have asked for a whiff. I asked if he had any from Ontario, but he said that the other tires all contained Southern Alberta atmosphere, caught in a state of great wildness.

I gave him fresh buttermilk to drink, in return for which he promised to mention me kindly in a book he is writing of the experiences of a motor tramp. I made him promise to look up Aunt Abigail, who is, at present, in Vancouver, and to tell her about my place. If he happens to mention the costume he saw me in he will be more than repaid for his trouble—that is, if he has any sense of humour.

The strawberries are almost over but early

raspberries keep the shipping about the same. On the heaviest strawberry days I had upwards of three hundred crates. We kept the train standing thirty or thirty-five minutes. People from the Pullman would stroll down to know why in thunder the train stood so long without a station to stand by, or something equally sensible. Once there, they usually remained to stare at the efforts of the expressman and myself at getting the shipments off; and to comment on my clothes. Yesterday, I heard a Johnny in an eyeglass tell a woman that I was some sort of Government inspector or some such thing, don't you know, and that the uniform was jolly becomin', bajove.

The breath of the entire valley has been almost taken away by most unlooked for actions on the part of Peter. It all began on Thursday when, at about four o'clock, he phoned to know if I was alone, as he wanted to see me most particularly.

The Mowitza excuse for coming over had been worn till of no further use so I knew there must be something new in the air and waited in a state of expectancy. When he came, he was dressed as I had never seen him before. Instead of his usual tweeds or khaki overalls, he wore a suit—new, I'm sure, of pin stripe serge.

"We are good friends, are we not, Miss Janet?" he began.

"Why, I hope we are."

"Then," he said, looking embarrassed but very

determined, "will you be good enough to act in my sister's place and tell me if these clothes are all right. Just go ahead and criticise as she would."

"But I don't know your sister, or how she would do it."

"She is a very thorough woman, and always saw to it that I was dressed right when she was around. But somehow, I don't seem to get the hang of company clothes. Is it asking too much of you?"

"Not at all. But—for what do you want to be correct? There is a difference, you know, between a morning wedding and a polo game."

He was too Scotch and too much in earnest to joke about it.

"For instance, if I was invited somewhere for Sunday dinner."

"Um-m," I answered. "Well, would you—*could* you part with that Strathcona?"

"This hat? Why, it's—surely I can——"

"With your everyday clothes it is just the thing, but get a dark one, conventional shape for this suit—and wear it straight on your head."

"And what else?"

"Personally, I prefer black boots, but that, of course——"

"Black boots. What about the tie?"

"It is splendid. And with a more military trim to your moustache and that watch chain hidden I

think you would be extraordinarily presentable."

"Do you really think so?" He was pleased as a child. "But about the watch chain,—why should I hide it? It is solid gold and was my father's."

"Never mind. That was just a notion of mine. And now, are you going to tell me why all this?"

"You will be the first one I shall tell, as soon as there is anything to tell. And many thanks."

He left me more mystified than I had been before he came. However, keeping an eye to the weather, as it were, I noticed that he went back to town and made the changes I had suggested. I also noticed that, thus arrayed, he presented himself at the Essingtons' later in the evening.

But even then, I almost had to support myself when, later on, he came round to announce that Eleanor had consented to be his wife. I collected myself and congratulated him heartily, after which I sent him over to tell the news to Mrs. Good. I had noticed that she put her light out so as to see whether he came in or not, so I thought that, as she had that much, she might as well have his reasons too.

Eleanor seems wonderfully happy and does not in the least mind the banter of the others over her conquest. She smiled serenely when I pretended to weep that I had accepted the asparagus, and thus, capitulating too easily, had lost his interest.

Words fail me when I attempt to tell you how much the chickens and I appreciate the shipment of cull wheat from the Three Bar. Two of the unfortunate chickens that have grown the fastest will leave here to-morrow, bound for Fort Weyne. They convey our gratitude. I hope you will be able to get a bountiful birthday dinner from them —for you and M. P. and his mother, whom you said you were having. I have asked Captain Fenton for dinner on the same evening; it is his birthday. Friday is bad enough; you may be glad that it is not the thirteenth as well. What a pity we could not join the two dinners and have a party all in one! I will not have anything like a mother-to-be to chaperone mine but I have asked my self-elected chaperone to come. Saundy seldom makes the descent from the station; says he is too old. He can phone his orders down easily and the man who tends his place takes his things up every Saturday. But this time he will waive custom and forget age in order to help me to give the Captain a pleasant birthday.

A crate of strawberries will be shipped with the chickens. They are to be your birthday present. I am proud to have something from my place to send, and do not apologise that the gift is not greater as I am economising so as to buy a friend a dear wedding present—that does not look right: "a dear friend a wedding present" is better.

Your statement that Mrs. Devereaux, Senior, is

going to decorate the Devereaux home before you arrive "to save you the trouble" filled me with the utmost alarm, especially as you said that, to keep peace, you had better let her do it.

Why do you cry "peace" when there will be no peace—when you are surrounded with the decorations that she will devise? I have been in the good woman's own house. The wall-paper was abundantly beflowered; the carpet magnificently bescrolled; then when, in the face of that, her chairs should have kept silence, she had chintzed every available piece in the room. Peace with your immediate surroundings will be much more important than peace with some one that you will see only once in a great while, if it comes to that decision—which I do not believe it will.

Just you weep a little on Mortimer's shoulder and say that it really doesn't matter a bit, but you *had* counted on the pleasure of doing the house yourself. He will then make it right with Mrs. Senior and you will continue to be a prime favourite with both.

This advice is good but use it now. It is not guaranteed to obtain the same effects after a year or two.

I shall send a full account of my dinner party. Do you the same.

Ever yours,

JANET K.

Arcady, July the seventeenth.

Dear Nan:

Outside of shipping berries, tending chickens, hilling celery and picking peas, my dinner party has filled my week pretty fully. You will gather from this that the preparations were, for me, quite elaborate. Many a time I longed for your able assistance. I should even have been glad of Rose, when it came to making the dessert. I was of a mind, at first, to have strawberry shortcake, but while mine, at times, aspire to great heights of fluffiness, they are by no means of the uniform and certain monotony of goodness that yours are, and I did not want to insult fried chicken with a heavy finis, such as some shortcakes I have made would be.

After momentous deliberation the final choice fell on ice-cream with a chocolate sauce. You remember dear old Mrs. Brice's saying that if she had some cream and a freezer, she would make some ice-cream, if she only had some ice. Well, I was better off than that. I had the cream and a freezer, "if I only had some ice." Nicky had once mentioned that they had an ice-house, so, thinking that probably an ice-house would contain ice, I rode over intending to bring some home on Molly's broad back.

The ice was there, all right, but Mr. Worth was away and Mrs. Worth had lost her key and forgotten the combination. I looked at the flimsy shack and knew that I could easily enough have gotten into it had she not been there, but there is something about her mild presence that discourages violence. So I was up against it, discouraged but not defeated, for, once an idea gets firm lodgement in my mind—as you know——. Just here I remembered that I had seen ice at the butcher's.

In a minute Molly's unwilling head was turned town-ward. In a few minutes more it came on rain—drenching, soaking rain. No, the butcher had no ice for sale. He had instructions not to sell any on any account. I asked him if there were any direct instructions against trading a piece for a basket of fresh green peas and a couple of early cauliflowers. I knew I had him there. He is a married man who has just arrived, too late to begin a garden.

"No," he said, as he dived into the rear room for the ice, "I've never heard of any objection to that particular deal."

He put a huge piece into a double sack, saying that the piece must be big and that I must hurry as ice would not last long in a summer rain. I tried to convey this idea to Molly but she objected strenuously to being asked to hurry with a sack of ice bumping about on her back.

I endeavoured to hold it out so that the sack would not touch her, but this almost pulled my arm out by the roots, beside which she stopped dead to turn and look at it each time. Finally I got down, tied the ice to the end of a rope and secured a stout switch, after which we made good time, even if the ice was bounding about at the rope's end in an alarming manner.

I washed the mud from the much diminished piece and hurried it into the freezer. The ice-cream was scrumptious, which, somehow, was more than I had expected.

Just as I finished it the phone rang. It was the man on the MacPhaill place with a message from Saundy, to say that, as it had rained so hard, he thought it best not to come down the hill this week-end, and would I send him some of the asthma tablets we had spoken of.

I sat down to puzzle this out. As far as I could remember, Saundy had never even mentioned the word asthma to me. Then I began to see. The message was really to tell me that he could not come to my party, and the tablets were thrown in as a blind for Mrs. Good, who, ever faithful on her job on the party telephone (especially when one long two shorts is wanted), would not be able to tell that anything unusual was in the air. I read in this his approval of my going ahead with the dinner, even if he could not be present.

By the time it was evening, the rain and chill

had made a small blaze in the fireplace pērmissible, so I set the table by it, with my first sweet peas to furnish fragrance, and wore my heliotrope organdy to complete the colour scheme. And when, after my guest had shed his raincoat and stood before the fire, he pronounced it all "a glimpse of heaven," I felt very happy, although I knew that many of his birthday parties must have been much more heavenly.

All rules of the food controller were off for the day, and my conscience did not trouble me that I had made this dinner to a returned hero something of a feast. Of course most of my dishes would come under the classification of perishable eatables, and one does not need to consider the matter of economy when on a farm. Figure out what it would cost you in Fort Weyne to serve a dinner such as this, every item of which I had patriotically produced my own self—even to the equivalent of the ice. We began with giant strawberries, picturesque in their hulls, and followed this with fried chicken à la Maryland and new potatoes in cream sauce—to get these potatoes I had scratched round under with my frying fork, so as not to disturb the hen, as it were, and cream sauce *is* cream sauce in Arcady. For vegetables I had young chard with mushroom sauce and water cress from the Essingtons' brook. And I mentioned the ice-cream, did I not?

For the birthday toast I felt warranted in open-

ing the champagne that had been Pierre Ribot's gift when he left to take his place with the French Reservists. You remember how he told us to treasure it on account of its venerable age, and said that if it cheered for us an "auspicious occasion," it would surely cheer him to the same extent, even if, by that time, he was filling a shallow French grave. Poor Pierre! I wonder where the cheer he believed in would find him.

When Captain Fenton took the bottle from the pail of ice and poured two glasses, I told him of Pierre Ribot's request that whenever or wherever the champagne was opened the first toast should be "France."

"And he is right," my companion said. "It is perfectly fitting that even an Englishman should put it so. To the valiant army and people across the water! To the Republic of France!"

Then I noticed that, having barely tasted the champagne, he set it to one side in apparent distaste.

"Is it not all right?" I asked.

"As champagne it is superb, but it takes me back all too vividly to the last toast I drank. I even remember that the wine is the same vintage."

"That was in France?" I asked.

He nodded. "In a little village on the Aisne. The mayor had invited our officers into a cellar—the only place where there were four walls and a ceiling—and had opened some treasured cham-

pagne to show his gratitude to the British who had driven out the invading enemy."

After a silence, in which he divided the Maryland chicken, he asked:

"Did you ever have a real friend, so much so that whether together or on opposite sides of the earth, you felt the same companionship?"

"I have one," I answered. I was thinking of you.

"Then you can better understand the regard I had for a chap from South Africa, who went through Cambridge with me. After that, we were cubs together in the German Embassy, where he was valuable on account of the fluent German he spoke. I knew nothing of his people—not even their nationality. One could tell, from his manner, that they were of the best, and as he did not mention them, I did not.

"Once, he came all the way to India to see me, and I think I averaged a letter a week from him, both there and here. And, down in that French cellar, it enhanced my joy in our victory to know that he was there and that we had come through together, unscratched.

"Just after our toast to the downfall of the Kaiser, he left the room. When next I saw him, it was between guards. He had been caught sending flash signals to the enemy.

"The evidence was incontestable. At daybreak

there was a squad. He looked into my eyes at the very last minute, begging me to understand. That was what was in the taste of the champagne. It made me see the eyes of that friend."

"But," I said, "he only got his deserts. A German spy, partaking of French hospitality while he betrayed the British army."

"His deserts! Oh, yes, I know. If there had only been he and I left in the world, I'd have shot him—but there it is. A man of rare qualities and a fine mind—see what war had made of him."

Captain Fenton insisted on helping me to wash up the dishes. It was so cosy, having him there, asking how one ever got cut glass dry, hunting where to put the cups and, finally, sweeping the crumbs from the hearth, that I was glad I had been persuaded from my original intention of leaving them for Chow.

Then he wheeled the davenport to the fire and, after he had held my wool while I wound it, he smoked in silence and watched me while I knitted. To my questions as to his life in India he replied in monosyllables, or merely with a sleepy nod. Once, when he had not answered me and I glanced up to see the reason, I saw that he was regarding me through half closed lids. He shrugged contentedly and said:

"Don't wake me up. I am dreaming."

So I abandoned myself to the content of the

crackle of the fire, the sleepy yawns and grunts of Bingo and the soft sound of the rain on the roof. Perhaps I did a little dreaming of my own.

When my little clock chimed ten, he shook himself out of his silence and got his cane, preparing to go. He took the sweet peas from the table then took my hand to say good-night.

"As I said," he said, "you've given me a glimpse of heaven, but I won't pretend that I think it has been good for one who is debarred."

"How do you mean, debarred?"

"I think you know."

"Then how, not good for him?"

"Thin ice, Janet," he said and was gone into the rain-washed dark.

With mental apologies to Pierre, I took the "bottled cheer" out to the back porch, where I dropped it into a bucket, wondering if the cheer had not, indeed, all flown back to him when released. Then, not being sleepy, I sat before the fire to ponder on the obtuseness of a certain titled cigarette fiend, and on the tragedy of a war that has deprived so many of their cherished dreams.

However, with the morning came the sun again, and in the work of the day there seemed no place for thoughts of tragedy. Almost the first thing I noticed was that that fool, Bingo, with a whole

brookful of water from which to quench his thirst, had actually lapped up from the bucket enough champagne to make him feel like sitting on his haunches and howling in a most dismal manner. Furthermore, he was not content with doing this at home but must needs place himself in front of Mrs. Good's doorstep, lured there, no doubt, by inebriated memories of a white cat he loved to chase. Soon, as I quite expected, the phone rang, and, for the first time in my life, I listened in on a party line.

Mrs. Good wanted the police station. She wanted a man sent at once to destroy a mad dog that was performing on her door-step. She wanted them to make haste as she was afraid to move lest the beast jump through a window. Very well, madam, they would attend to the matter at once.

Hardly had I hung up when there came three shorts, Mrs. Good's call. It was Captain Fenton explaining to her that the dog was not mad but acting foolishly on account of his having carelessly left some alcohol where he could get it. He promised to come for the dog and to keep him till he felt sensible again. She was none too pleased with this turn of events.

"But what of the way he chases my cat?" she asked.

"The cat is safe for the present," he said.

"The dog is in no condition to successfully chase anything. I will tell them at the station."

So that is all as to my dinner. As to yours, I hope it was very jolly and that you will have many, many more like it.

Ever your

JANET K.

Arcady, July twenty-fourth.

Dear Nan:

Another strenuous week has winged its way into history. Excepting, perhaps, the first week of transplanting, it has been the hardest week's work I have done in Arcady. I allude to the pruning of some two thousand tomato plants.

There has been an unusually heavy rainfall this summer and, while it has made the raspberry crop tremendous and brought on the corn, cucumbers and all that wonderfully, the tomato plants do not seem to know what to do with so much moisture, so have made the mistake of growing most prodigious plants.

I was enjoying this till I noticed that my neighbours were all busy reducing the size of theirs and then Captain Fenton told me to get Chow at work on mine. When I went to find Chow he was already there; had made a good beginning, in fact. He got some pruning shears for me and showed me what leaves and shoots should come off and what should be left to bear the tomatoes and nourish the plant. Then they were tied to stakes and left to the sunshine which is gorgeous and all-pervading again.

As soon as Nicky had finished with the irk-

some task of helping with this work at home, he came over to have the fun of assisting with ours. My head was almost dizzy with the heat on the day that he came, so I said:

"Surely, Nicky, you've had enough of this. Don't be foolish enough to do it when you don't have to."

"Shucks. I'm not a bit tired. If you'll play German while we do it, I'll help all week. No, I've nothing to do at home, honest."

"In that case, I will play German gladly, and what is more, I will take you with me the next time I go up to Saundy's station."

"Oh well, then!" he said, and fell to work with such enthusiasm that he almost forgot that he was dealing with my future income.

Nicky and I are both in despair of ever becoming as adept at pruning as is Chow. He has about half of the rank growth cut away and the plant tied to its stake before I have decided where to begin on mine. When I tell you that almost the entire patch of two thousand plants has been pruned, you will see that some one has been hurrying during the week.

I think we should have finished but that I took a vagrant notion and absconded on Captain Fenton's Midnight for a whole afternoon. It was all the fault of the horse; he thought of the idea first. I had just finished my lunch, and, distasteful as was the thought of going back to that sticky, dis-

agreeable job, had valiantly grasped my pruning scissors and started forth.

Midnight had crossed the little bridge and was standing by my porch. As soon as he saw me, he reached his glossy head and whispered in my ear:

"Pruning is an awful bore. Let us go for a run."

Without stopping to think of the indelicacy of Midnight's proposal, or to find out whether he was wanted for the afternoon, I threw my saddle into place and was soon away, riding as easily and smoothly as though I were flying.

I turned him in the direction of the Arrow, not having been there for some time. We arrived in time to see young William give a few final kicks before expiring on the grass just inside the wire gate. I was too terrified for words and somehow expected to see the other animals follow suit. I hurried to the nearest telephone and summoned Peter, who is the standard authority on the reasons why animals are unpatriotic enough to die without regard for the present scarcity of beef.

Peter rode right out and pronounced William's indiscretion to be the fatal one of eating twigs off the trees and shrubs. He said that he had lost one or two valuable milch cows in the same way. There are compensations on a prairie cattle farm after all, to wit, there are no twigs.

William was buried by Peter, who also examined the rest of the herd for signs of the unprofitable habit. Had there been any there would be nothing one could do about it except to take them home and put them in the stable, for once they begin eating twigs, they eat and eat, rather than stretch their lazy heads down to the good grass.

I threatened to take them all home and put them on the clover, garden or no garden, but Peter said they might get up early some morning after a rain, eat wet clover and die in the very same manner.

Peter helped me to fill a pail of wild raspberries, red and black, and we spent a very companionable afternoon, talking mostly of Eleanor. He confided that they were going to be married very soon, spend a month at the coast, going there by way of Banff, at the end of which time he is going overseas to join a Highland regiment.

"But what of your place?" I asked.

"Eleanor will keep my place for me. She will see that the fruit is harvested and will probably move her bees there when the winter comes."

"And does she not mind your going?"

"She is glad that I am to go. Isn't she wonderful?"

"They all are. Why, I'm not glad myself. I can only think of how much I shall miss such a good neighbor."

And I shall too, Nan. He is really a tower of

strength and I am sorry that I ever thought mean thoughts of him.

Right then and there I bought two young cows from him as well as his mate for Mowitza. Eleanor does not want to be bothered with the stock, except his riding horse, which she will keep for him.

Riding home, as we passed Captain Fenton's gate he remarked:

"I know now what Johnny Good meant when he said, after he had enlisted, that it felt good to be able to look Fenton square in the eye when he met him."

Instead of Chow's stooped figure in its faded blue smock over in the tomato patch as I had left him and expected to find him, Midnight almost stumbled over him, kneeling beside the stone-flagged walk.

"What *are* you doing, Chow?" I demanded as my eye took in a small trench that ran from the house down to the bridge at the brook.

"Dig a ditch," he answered truculently.

"Well, but why?"

"Mrs. Good, she away."

"Is that a reason for digging up my garden?"

"Capt'n Fenton, he says so."

I looked and saw that from the bridge to his house was another little trench. Great as was my mystification, it did not obliterate my hunger so I went into the house to look for something

to eat. Saundy's man had left some mushrooms, so, having fried them and piled them on toast, I sat by the kitchen window to puzzle out the matter of the trenches. I could more easily have believed Chow had he attributed the idea to Nicky.

Then, sitting there, I saw that my neighbour was engaged in the odd pursuit of laying a wire in the trench, covering it with the soil again as he went along. He came in this way right down to the bridge, ran the wire under the planks and proceeded in the same way up to my house.

When I came out I could see that he hadn't known that I was home. His face was that of a small boy caught in the jam jar.

"Did you know," he asked, "that a new company has just been promoted, with your name down for fifty-one per cent of the stock?"

"How odd," I said, "that I had not been informed. What is this company?"

"It is the Arcady-Albemarle Telephone Company."

"Is that a telephone wire?"

"It is. I shall put an instrument in my house and one in yours, then we can talk whenever we feel like it; you can call me if for any reason you need me, and——"

"But," I asked, "don't you like to look at me when you talk to me?"

"I'd rather look at you than do anything else on earth," he said, with that odd note of sin-

cerity that almost compels one to believe, in spite of the fact that one knows better. "But I am not thinking of myself. I am thinking of you."

"Well, I like to look at you too."

"Thanks. Perhaps, then, I should say I am thinking of Mrs. Good."

"Oh-h. Why this sudden—what have you heard?" I asked.

"Nothing much. But the combination across the way is a high explosive that it will not do to tamper with. Peter happened to be in the house when Rose went over there from here. Of course, for myself, I don't care what they say——"

"Neither do I," I said. "So why worry about such people?"

"We need not worry, of course, but the safe way is in not supplying them with material. That is the real reason for the Arcady-Albemarle Telephone Company—to keep them guessing."

He got the phone installed and connected with the batteries before the Goods got home. In my house it stands in the part of the bookcase that is curtained for magazines, and I can sit on a low hassock and talk to my heart's content.

I was quite excited when he called me and the little bell rang for the first time. It took me a while to get off the guarded manner one uses on a party line, but when I did it was comfortable to feel that no one, not even a central, was listening.

Next week we must finish hilling the celery for the first time. We are using boards for the early varieties, and banking the late so that it cannot freeze so readily if left in the soil till an early frost happens along. I have two rows of the self-blanching variety and it is almost ready for market now. I go out and get some for my supper whenever I think of it. Next week I expect to market the two earliest rows of cauliflower. We have tied the leaves over their faces so as to prevent freckles and sunburn, for, in market circles, white is the fashionable complexion for cauliflower.

Every one of my small roses has either a bloom or one or two buds. It is so exciting to see what colour and shape each will be. The rose garden is the first spot I visit every morning. What will it be like when I can bring in an armful with me each time!

The neighbours all profess to think that, for first year soil, mine is producing beautifully. My corn is almost six inches higher than that in any other garden. I think that is because I set it out in a three days' rain and it got no set back, as plants on which the sun shines while being transplanted do.

I feel guilty every time I look at my corn and think of what the Mortimer-Deanes' would be by now. I must see that they get some often from mine.

Must close and get my cream can and a shipment of head-lettuce and early beans off. Nicky is helping Chow to hitch now, leaning far over to protect his precious Sunday suit. It is a bore to have to ship on Sunday, but things must go when ready. It would be a crime to waste them at this time.

More and more each week I wish I had a car. If so, I could leave here when the train whistles as it rounds the curve at the other end of Goat Mountain, and could be back again with my feet on the porch rail in twenty minutes. If quite convenient for you to manage that other payment in August, I think I really must have one.

And then, if I squander my last reserve in that manner, it will be up to me to make the place go —or go broke. However, I think I shall make it go. The thing to do is to hang on till the trees are bearing, after which the work is easier and the returns secure.

Very much love from

JAN.

Arcady, July thirty-first.

Dear Nan:

See if you can close your eyes and imagine Janet Kirk picking peas at four o'clock in the morning. That is what I have done every morning, only that on alternative days it was beans instead of peas that I gathered.

I must admit that it is a bit hard to get out of a cosy bed at four in the morning, but once out, the crisp early air banishes all thoughts of sleep and makes one glad one has a garden to get one out. In fact, that is the only time when I do not mind the slow and tiresome job of picking peas; it is just so good to be alive that I do not mind what I am doing.

Round about five o'clock, Chow is in the patch too. When I first suggested to him that he get up early and then sleep in the heat of the day as I do he shook his head decidedly:

"No, no," he said. "Daytime sleep no good."

However, the intense heat of the sun soon changed his mind. Whether he sleeps or not, he at least gets out of the sun.

Getting an early start like that, we are always ready to carry the buckets in at about ten to get them ready for market. The sight of figures

seemingly drooping in the sun in other gardens always makes me thankful that I have done my morning's work in the wonderful night—cool that we always have in the mountains.

There is no such thing as a bushel or a peck in market-gardening in the west. Everything is sold by the pound and crated.

Corn and cucumbers go by the crate, so many dozen to the crate. Some use sacks for peas and beans, instead of crating them, and it was from this that I got what I am told is a bright idea in shipping mine. My peas are what we call nines, having nine peas in almost every pod, and I thought it such a shame that they had to be covered like ordinary peas that grow in fours, fives and sixes. To avoid this I made shipping sacks of white mosquito netting, of a size to hold ten pounds each, and you have no idea how well the peas, beans and cauliflower look when shipped in these sacks.

I sent a small sample sack to a firm in Lethbridge, and got an order by return mail, asking for all I could spare. The next day, what with the three things, I had ten sacks, all done up with Arcady tags and looking nicer than I had ever seen garden-truck look, anywhere.

The trainmen evidently shared my modest opinion for they crowded round and offered me fifteen cents a sack more than I had been offered by the distributing firm. I could have sold the lot

easily but I took future orders instead. The conductor made me a dazzling offer for all the peas I could supply that were as big as these.

"But they have a market value," I said. "There is no use in your paying more."

"I don't know anything about market values," he said, "but I do know that my wife makes me shell the peas and I know what I want when I see it."

As the raspberries are almost over and Mrs. Worth can easily manage theirs now, Mr. Worth is working on my bathroom. He hopes to finish it before the haying on the flats commences.

The fact that I ordered all that paraphernalia myself and that things are correct as to measurement and design puzzles him sorely. So also does the fact that I had gotten the sink, tank and water-front connected up successfully. He never even heard the like of it. Never.

In fact, I often see him standing, lost in profound meditation, as he endeavours to grasp the magnitude of the enigma. Having never before been able to even imagine what must be the thoughts of a plumber as he stands in one of these trances, I feel more than pleased with the achievement.

I have not shown him my book on plumbing as he told me once that it took seven years to master the difficult art of plumbing—steam-fitting or some such thing goes with it—and I did not want

to destroy this illusion. I merely said that it was a little knack I was born with—plumbing and steam-fitting.

Mrs. Morty has offered me the use of her rouge, her French perfumes, her shampoo—the same as Queen Mary uses—and all the lotions and paraphernalia that a wealthy sister sends from London, imagining them to be useful on a fruit farm, if she may come over twice a week for a full length bath. I made the bargain with the proviso that it be not compulsory either for her to take the bath or for me to use the beauty supplies.

The Mortimer-Deanes' dragon aunt has been quite ill. It has been bad enough for her doctor to have sent them two or three cables about it.

"They sound," he told me, "as though the doctor feared the worst."

"I refuse to be cheered," his wife said. "She is probably playing a trick on us."

Then, seeing my look of astonishment, she said:

"It's merely my unusual honesty that shocks you, my dear. I have a beastly headache from stooping in that garden. I always get one, and, as she alone is responsible, I can't pretend to hope that they keep up just to benefit her."

The Mortimer-Deanes have a cousin working in the Canyon mills, who, having heard of the cables, came down to enquire. They were at Arcady

when he came, having come for the milk, and then stayed on for a game of tennis, so he came on here to see them.

I was glad to hear Mortimer-Deane express only sorrow at the news he gave, and was quite surprised when he spoke of not going home, even in case the worst came, but that he thought of pulling up stakes and going on to New Zealand, unless the military let down the bars in the meantime and took him on.

I have been pondering on this news ever since. The neighbourhood will take on quite a different colour with both Peter and the Mortimer-Deanes away. I have never met any one that could just take the place of either of them.

On Thursday we got our first English mail for some time. I got three from Ned, in the cavalry section, you know, and was so eager to hear that he was all right that I gave the team to Chow and slid into the hammock, just as I was, to open them. Even the thrill of knowing what an only brother was doing "over there" was powerless to keep me awake for long. In the drowsiness of the noon heat, my siesta overtook me where I was.

In one of the letters Ned had told of a night raid of enemy airplanes, in which the horses, terrified by the roar of the machines overhead and the lights flashing hither and yon, stampeded, causing terrible havoc in the cavalry section.

All of this letter became woven into a dream in which I was in an airplane myself. Ned, who was the pilot, had just noted an enemy plane pursuing ours, so the hum of the engine rose higher and higher as he tried to elude them. When the pursuing airman was just over us he dropped a bomb in our direction. Our plane was struck and lurched horribly, almost upsetting me. At this I woke with my heart in my mouth to see that Bingo had just jumped into the hammock with me and seemed to be wanting to tell me something.

I realized what had hit the airship, almost upsetting it, and that the fact that Bingo was panting with the heat or a chase after Good's cat would account for the sound of an engine that had been so plain. But the sound of humming was still in my ears, growing more insistent. Why, I wondered sleepily, should the enemy's engine still hum when I had discovered that my machine was a hammock and my engine a dog.

But it was not till Bingo, despairing of making me understand him, jumped to the porch rail and barked savagely, that I sat up to investigate. There, a few feet away, the cause of the loud humming was taking shape.

My bees had swarmed.

They were settling in about the head of one of my dainty cherry trees, making it look like an absurd toy balloon on a string.

I was in a turmoil of excitement. I did know that it was as well not to have Bingo there barking at them, but there my knowledge ended. I knew the Essingtons' phone was out of order so that I could not ask Eleanor what to do about it. Finally I got Captain Fenton on the A-A telephone line.

"What does one do when one's bees swarm?" I asked.

"You get them into a hive, of course," he told me.

"Back into the same one?"

"Heavens, *no!* Have you no other?"

"No, none."

"Nor a box that would do?"

"I haven't a thing."

"Did you call Eleanor?"

"I can't get them."

"I'd go up for a hive but you need something quicker than I could get it here. Oh, I have it. Peter has one of Eleanor's. He was going to make some more like it and took it to copy. Get him to bring it over."

So I called Peter and he brought a Langstroth hive of Eleanor's on the back of his horse, which seems not to have an outrageable dignity such as Molly's. Then the two of us, neither of whom had ever handled a single bee before, proceeded to get that swarm into the hive.

If the bees swarm on an apple tree branch, as they often do, it is easy to take the branch to where one wants the bees, but breaking off an entire cherry tree and nipping thousands of dollars' worth of cherries in the bud, as it were, was another matter. So we took the mountain to Mohammed. Peter set the house before the little tree in a most inviting manner. Then, at his direction, I got a sheet and spread it on the ground in front of the hive, after which he shook the tree until the bees were loosened and most of them shaken on the sheet. I expected the bees to be angry enough, in the face of such treatment, to rise up and demolish us, but they seemed to take it as a matter of course, and, when Peter had gently given them a general idea of where to go, they piled into the hive in great order.

Peter thought that, when I told Eleanor of our feat, I need not have mentioned that he shooed them in with the broom, and that I need not have betrayed our ignorance of the fact that bees almost never sting at this time by telling of the hastily improvised gas masks that we wore. However, I thought that, having turned the trick most successfully, we should worry whether or not they laughed about the methods.

I am sure I shall get along famously with my bees. Eleanor is going to show me how to cut out the queens so that there will be no more

swarming in this season. The two hives look quite companionable as they sit side by side among the currant bushes, and it begins to look like a regular apiary.

Mrs. Good and Rose were quite curious to know of Peter why I had called him on the telephone instead of Captain Fenton. Peter said that likely I had called the Captain first and that he, knowing that the hive was there, had suggested that I ask for it.

"Nothing of the sort," Mrs. Good retorted. "There wasn't a ring all morning till she called you. After calling him for next to nothing, as she has done dozens of times, it is extremely strange that she does not call him when she really has a reason. Perhaps he is beginning to size her up as I did in the beginning."

When Peter ventured to inquire whether that need prevent my calling the Captain, her unanswerable parting shot was that he was "just like a man."

Rose went to her home for this week-end but is coming back again, although I cannot see what pleasure she gets out of it. Of course, Mrs. Good insists that she be just a visitor and that she would not think of charging for her board. What she really would not think of is paying out money for an extra farm hand, which is what Rose really has been.

Monday morning is the time Mrs. Good holds sacred to writing to Johnny, and, in the meantime, Rose is graciously allowed to proceed with the washing.

"Sunday," she says, "was not made to write letters in, neither should it be profaned by knitting or washing one's hair."

The last was, of course, the inevitable shot at me. While still puzzled by her enmity, I have come to be resigned to it. At the last small advance I made she piously wondered what I could be up to this time, so I have decided to forget that she exists, at least in so far as is possible.

Sorry to say that it will be quite impossible for me to attend your wedding, as on September tenth, the day you mention, we shall be in the very thick of our three big crops,—tomatoes, cucumbers and corn. However, I shall think of you and hope that your wedding veil and Montague's halo are each on straight.

I think your wedding plans very sensible, also your idea of running in to Winnipeg in the new car for a week, and then spending a real honeymoon in California when winter comes.

As you are to be married two days after election, it is up to the "peepul" to decide whether or not this week will be much of a celebration. Give my regards to all the old crowd in the wheat city when you get there, and as for the present,

I could wish to get your letters with a little more regularity. Up to the present I have refrained from being jealous of M. P.

Enough, I trust, has been said.

Love from

JAN.

Arcady, August the seventh.

Dear Nan:

Arcady has just received an order for three dozen milk-fed broilers for a huge trade banquet to be held in a thriving prairie city on Labour Day. An enquiry as to my price on that number came about a week ago, and as I was not anxious for the trouble of crating and milk-feeding chickens that are growing wonderfully well roaming at large, I named a price that I was sure would end the matter then and there. And as a special anti-inducement I said that I should require the name of Arcady be mentioned on the banquet menus.

The next letter expressed their entire satisfaction with the price I had named, and also said that they would take great pleasure in mentioning the source of supply.

So I have made the crates, whitewashed them and selected thirty-six of the largest cockerels. They are on a very light diet at present, for the change from wide range to close quarters is apt to bring on indigestion if they are allowed to stuff at first. Then, when they are reduced to hunger, their rations can be increased as fast as they seem able to take it, and in a month their

flesh should be greatly increased, and temptingly delicious as well.

If I find that it is not too terribly much trouble, I may advertise that grade of bird and put quite a number of them off in that manner.

Sixty of the largest pullets have been selected and set aside for Arcady's laying flock, and I have all sorts of plans in my head for fancy-packing the eggs for special trade. Then, when February comes, I shall buy the largest White Wyandotte cockerel in the world and get outrageous prices for my sets of hatching eggs.

For this a foreign market will have to be worked up, as I have been told that most of the local chicken raisers expect to trade a dozen eggs, laid by a dozen different kinds of mongrel hens, for the same number of pure-strain eggs. If I see any such people approaching Arcady, I want to be able to hang a "sold out" sign in the window.

I really wanted to set aside one hundred pullets for the egg business, but with grain prices out of sight, as they are, I have decided to be satisfied with five dozen eggs each day. Did I hear anybody smile?

The mention of chicken food brings me to thoughts of my sunflower hedge. How I wish you might see it. The line of yellow is visible for miles—and it is straight! Not a single flower is out of alignment. The way in which the hedge singles Arcady out from among the other farms

makes me feel compensated for the poor showing we made in apple-blossom time.

Your mention that your hay is all under canvas fills me with envy for we are only thinking of beginning ours, but of course you do not have to wait till spring floods have left your fields before the hay can grow.

Cynthia Essington and I have formed a Maud Muller partnership. Not that we shall look the part of that demure maiden or that a judge is liable to venture our way—but at least we shall be making hay.

Cynthia is the stock-raising Essington. In her menagerie, as she calls it, she has two horses, two cows, ten pigs and almost one hundred turkeys. It was really her enthusiasm that got me into the venture. She says it means a tremendous difference, not having to buy hay during the winter.

In the partnership, I supply the mower and team, while she furnishes a rake and the tent and supplies for our camp. We shall come home week-ends for a fresh grub-stake. Thursday we took the tent down and set it up, making everything ready to begin to-morrow morning. We "claimed" a spot on the edge of the flats where the water covers the ground for only a short time. We are earlier than any one else, for the hay on the lower areas is not yet mature. It is only along the edge that one can gather it at this

time, but we thought it best not to run haying and September gardening together. Anyhow, most of the best spots near the river's edge are claims of such long standing that I doubt if even the Government itself would dare dispute them.

When we had set the tent and all in place, we decided, as it was still early, to avail ourselves of the kind invitation of Eve and Mary Milton to visit their goose farm.

We did not make the trip in motorcycle time by any means, and as Molly and Dexter ambled along in the hot sun we waxed eloquent over the advantages of travel by motor.

The farm on which the Milton sisters "do their bit," not to mention making a tidy income, slopes from east to west down to a brook that enters the Kootenay farther along. In order that the geese may have a pond the girls have built a dam, with a gate that allows of running out the water every day or so so as to start with a clean slate again.

The place was fascinating in its orderliness. They have long sheds for housing the birds, from which yards ran down to the water, across it and up again among the trees of a peach orchard on the other side. The first yard we entered contained Toulouse geese. The girls explained that most of the young were incubator birds as they had not found the Toulouse mothers very diligent or successful. Cynthia mentioned having

heard that the goose eggs were difficult of hatching by artificial incubation.

"They really are," Eve said. "Last year we had terribly poor luck—only seventy-five hatching from three hundred eggs. But we were not discouraged. This year we enlarged the incubator house and put in four hundred eggs. We had over three hundred and fifty birds."

"What was the difference?" I asked.

"We are not sure. Last year the eggs seemed not to be fertile so we preserved twenty males for the sixty layers. Also, we kept the eggs at higher temperature and much more moist while incubating, so that we cannot tell why we have more this year. Probably a little of both reasons."

"Do you never hatch by setting?" I asked her.

"Almost entirely, among the Embdens here." We were now in a yard where half grown and full grown white geese were everywhere.

"They make wonderful sitters and mothers. Also, we started quite a number with a week in the incubator and finished them under hens. We were the cause of a famine in sitting hens hereabouts. This method is very successful in getting them hatched but the goslings are very affectionate and do better with a mother of their very own.

In the next division were Chinese birds, also white. They explained the preponderance of white by saying that the feathers are softer and

so more valuable. The Chinese geese seemed very timid, and, at our presence, sent up shrill cries that were piercing and deafening. The girls say they do not mind any one they know well.

"And here are our real pets," Mary said, opening the gate into the last yard. "Domesticated Canada wild geese. Don't you love their white collars?"

She entered the yard alone and was soon surrounded by a gabbling crowd that rubbed their heads against her and nipped at her fingers and boot laces. These were the very same dark grey birds that we used to go sniping for on the little prairie lakes, and Mary showed us that the only tie that held them to civilisation was one clipped wing.

"Do you want to see them fed?" Eve asked.

At our affirmative she went down an iron track that ran past the top of each yard and disappeared into a shed from which a smoking chimney protruded. When she came out she was followed by a small, dried up Chinaman who pushed a tram car on the track.

At the very first squeak of its wheels the general racket commenced. Down from the green grass of the peach orchard slope came dozens and hundreds of birds, their wings spread and their throats squawking hoarsely. What a splashing as they hurried through the pond! And once through, how they charged up the slope to where

the troughs were placed, almost falling into them in their hurry.

As the Chinaman pushed this cart along he filled the troughs with a mixture that smelled like corn meal porridge. The sound of the yellow beaks on the zinc lining of the troughs was like the rattle of hail on a tin roof. In less than five minutes' time, supper had been served to several hundred birds.

"No wonder they wanted moving pictures of this," Cynthia gasped. "I think it is wonderful. My turkeys are not brought up in any such luxury. After the first few weeks they are turned out on the mountain side to rustle their own breakfast among the grasshoppers and are fed at night to bring them back to their shelter."

"I am afraid," Eve said, "that our geese would not appreciate that treatment any more than your turkeys would this lovely, gravel-bottomed pond. But I thought turkeys were terribly hard to raise. How do you manage to be so successful?"

"I keep them dry while young; they have plenty of range and their quarters are absolutely clean and sanitary. I do not know of anything else, except that the climate is ideal for them. They are much more easily hatched than geese."

"Yes. But once these are hatched, one need not have any more brains than the geese themselves to raise them. Come in and we shall have tea."

By this time the birds were back again on the water, plucking at their feathers and each other contentedly, and the Chinaman was sluicing out the feeding pans and the cart with a hose.

Beyond the cabin were fields of turnips, carrots, cabbage and clover, which, they explained, were almost the only feed the breeding stock required over the winter.

Over the teacups I asked what had led the girls into the venture. At this question they both smiled, and said that it was one that was always being asked them.

"We only tell the truth to people with a sense of humour. The others would think that too much geese had gone to our heads," was Eve's answer.

"Thanks. Go on," said Cynthia.

"Well. In Ontario the two of us lived alone with father, and, after he had gone and it was necessary for us to do or die, we began to take stock of our resources and abilities. To tell the truth there were very little of either. Mary could teach music but two or three could do it better and already had the pupils.

"At the time, we had with us an elderly and not very likeable Cousin Beulah, playing propriety. She was an insomniac, as we called it, and blamed her sleeplessness on the noise of our geese. Mary and I always slept like logs—which is probably our stock in trade in this business.

We told Cousin Beulah that she only imagined she heard the geese and, I am ashamed to say, began to regard with a sort of affection anything that had power to annoy our guardian.

"Things came to a head when, one day, an old neighbour woman brought her geese, wanting to sell them, as she could no longer stand the racket they made.

" 'How odd,' I said. 'Qurs never make a sound.'

" 'Then you are the one as should have them,' she said, 'if you think that.'

"That was where the idea was born.

"When Cousin Beulah could get her voice, she declared that she would be in the lunatic asylum if I brought another noisy goose on that place.

" 'That will be all right, Cousin Beulah,' I said, finishing the idea as I went along. 'We are not going to have them here. We are going to take them to British Columbia to Billy's peach farm.'

"In spite of her objections that bears and lions would eat the geese and us, and her hint at our ingratitude to her in wanting to come West to our only brother, I persisted in the idea.

"We sold the farm and took a short agricultural course. After that we toured the county buying up geese, packed them in a car with our other belongings, and here we are. And although we are two hundred miles from the prairie market, we are closer in hours than we were when

thirty miles from a city. Will you have more tea?"

"How fortunate that you have a brother," I remarked.

"Did you think he was here?" she asked. "Why, no. The minute war came he shoved the place onto our hands and was off. He said we had been sent by Providence to keep the farm running so that he could go."

They gave us feathers enough for two gorgeous pillows to take to Eleanor and promised to give some to us as soon as we could show just cause why they should.

As a farewell to tennis before we went to the flats I decided to have another party yesterday. I made a loaf of nut bread and phoned to all the people round who play, and to Mrs. Perry and Peter who are learning. Rose is again at Goods', so I asked her too.

She accepted with alacrity and was quite effusive when she got here. I could see that her eagle eye took in the fact that Captain Fenton, when not playing, divided his attentions between Mrs. Morty and Maude Essington, and troubled very little with me.

When I went in for the tea, she slipped her arm in mine and came along.

"Poor Mrs. Good," she sighed, sure of my sympathy, I suppose, if she adopted a hostile tone there. "She *is* in a stew to know why you and

Captain Fenton do not phone each other any more. Sometimes I think that she must burst if she cannot find out what she wants to know."

"How alarming!" I exclaimed. "Perhaps, in that case, it would be kinder to enlighten her."

"Well, how can I? What could I tell her?"

"You can tell her this," I said, "and it is perfectly true; Captain Fenton and I are on excellent terms, as usual. In fact he called me twice this morning."

"But—I was there myself. No one called you all morning."

"Yes, he did, twice. Will you carry this kettle of hot water?"

She was still too puzzled for words when she handed the Captain his tea.

"You look bewildered," he remarked.

"I am wondering," she said, "whether to believe Janet or my own ears. She says that you called her on the phone twice this morning. Is she not mistaken?"

"No."

"Why, I was listening and did not hear the ring once. I was wondering if she had gotten back from the flats. Are you *sure* you called her this morning?"

"Quite. The first time, if you remember, it was about the bees; the next time——"

"*Of course* I do not know what you talk about. But I thought the ring was one long, two shorts."

"Correct."

"Then there is something wrong with our bell. Mrs. Good will want it attended to. I must go, Janet. This has been lovely. Mrs. Good asked me to say, Captain Fenton, that she will be glad to have you over any time. I hope you will come."

"Thank you," was his reply.

I was glad to hear that, owing to your confiding in M. P., you are to have the pleasure of decorating your own home. It is nice that it was not necessary for you to weep on his shoulder, as you will still have that trump card reserved for a weightier occasion.

Yes, I can hear your indignant denials that you will ever weep, anywhere or on anything, but remember, Nan dear, that while we reach for new advantages, it is as well not to let go the old, which may, after all, be much the best.

I am also glad that the campaign is looking so rosy. Do you read the opposition papers? How I should like to boost with a full-sized vote. If you liked that eulogy of M. P. in the Bulletin, I don't mind telling you that it was written by yours very truly. Not a bad interview, was it?

Must close and go to Essingtons' for my roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. Owing to the heat we shall top it off with ice-cream to-night. And then for the hay fields.

For this week

MAUD MULLER.

Arcady, August twenty-eighth.

DEAR NAN:

It seems like ages since I wrote you and I cannot tell you how much I appreciated your frequent letters, even though I was unable to answer them. At present I am allowed to sit on the davenport for the sake of a change from the bed and to rest my eyes after too much of that undecorated room. Mrs. Good said that when my fever was high and I talked a great deal, I kept insisting that I was going to begin to paint it at once. But here I am, ahead of myself.

Cynthia and I were blithely contemplating haying, I believe, last time I wrote you. Well, we got it cut, beautifully, although Molly and Dexter sadly missed the language that old Ben used on such occasions. They had to learn to turn corners all over again as I was quite unable to swear them around in the manner that he did.

Then, on the day that we intended to begin to rake it rained; and oh, the ease with which it rains in haying-time along the noble Kootenay! Bright sunshine rested everywhere else but on our hayfield. When one cloud had finished with us it moved on to make room for another bent on the same mission. We were some distance from

the tent when it began, so we ran across and took refuge with a Mrs. Potter. She made us tea and seemed to be glad of the rain that forced us to stay with her. It rained on so she insisted on our staying for supper, so that by the time we got the horses dried off and in their shelter it was almost dark.

We got ready for bed by means of a lantern, only to find that the tent walls had leaked and the bed was damp.

As neither of us was in the humour to dress, get the horses and travel the three miles home, we put a blanket over the mattress, changed the sheets and made the best of it. A chill wind came up in the night and we awoke to find ourselves half frozen. We had not known that we might need our eiderdowns for haying in August.

Also, our throats were sore and our shoulders stiff and aching. Cynthia suggested that we go home and let her mother dose us and I tried to get her to go, but as I had no mother to look after me and wanted to get the hay done I insisted on staying, so she, with a stubborn streak that matches mine, stayed on too.

The night wind had dried the hay so I put the team to the rake and drove to the upper grass, while Cynthia attempted to dry the bedding at the tent.

Soon I saw how foolish I had been. My head got heavier as the sun rose higher, and black

spots danced with the heat between me and my team. Finally I succumbed to the circles that my head had been swinging in, and in some strange manner I fell forward and under the wheel. I only remember a sort of crunching as the wheel went over my chest. I may add that it was a barred iron wheel.

Cynthia found me hours later when Bingo, after being scolded for acting like a mad dog, got it into her head that something was wrong. My face had a coat of sunburn on one side that was days in going.

Cynthia and Mrs. Potter improvised a stretcher and got me to the Potter cottage. I was so afraid that I would be put to bed there that I made light of my cold and the sharp pain in my chest, so Cynthia phoned for a car to come and take us home. We hired Mrs. Potter's son to finish the hay and bring the team and other effects home.

Arcady did look good to me again. Cynthia came into the house, lit a fire and helped me to get to bed. She put a hot water bottle at my feet and gave me a dose of all the medicines she found in the bath cabinet. Then, after having phoned the doctor, who was away for the time being, she went on home to her mother to be coddled in much the same way herself. She asked me to phone them if I wanted anything before the doctor came, but, once inside my sheets, I knew that nothing on earth would tempt me to leave them.

I was sore and stiff from tip to toe, my head seemed splitting, and my ears heard weird noises.

I did want to answer when I heard the Arcady-Albermarle bell ring but I could not even rise on my elbow. As I rather expected, he came right over. When, after looking about, he stood in the door of my room, he looked so alarmed that I tried to laugh,—for the last time in many days. I heard him at the telephone, moving heaven and earth to find Doctor Beath. Then he came back and announced:

"I am going to stay till he comes."

"You can't," I said with an effort.

"No. That's right. I'll go for Eleanor Essington."

"Eleanor is away."

"Then one of them."

"No," I said. "All I want is a chance to sleep till Doctor Beath comes."

He thought a moment, then went out, returning with a piece of electric wire, with which he moved my telephone to the chair beside my bed.

"Will you promise me to call if you feel worse or get alarmed?" he asked. "If not, I'll stay right here. I think you are in a bad way."

"Yes, I'll call you. Please go," I said.

After that I drowsed along, seeming to be swinging in fantastic circles. As these got to be wilder and more frequent and my throat seemed to be swelling shut, I got the idea that if some one

did not soon come I would really go on one of the long slides that I seemed in danger of in my swinging.

I rang the A-A bell and got such an instant "yes," that I am sure he had the machine in his hand. Then I found that I could not speak; could not make a sound.

The fact that Bingo was standing there, looking so much as though he wanted to help, made me think of that absurd trick you taught him of barking when you made a sort of click with your finger-nails. I did not know whether he had forgotten it, but it seemed the only resort so I tried it. He remembered. With his feet on the edge of the bed, he barked vociferously.

I heard an exclamation of alarm at the other end of the wire and had only queer impressions of the happenings after that. One was of some one praising Bingo; another of a doctor sounding my chest and putting things in my throat; another, at first hazy and floating through mazes of grotesque imaginings, finally resolved itself into a blue uniform with a white apron over it that moved noiselessly about my room. I wondered how Dolly Drew had gotten into my house. Suddenly I found that I had a voice—queer and hoarse, but still a voice.

"Dolly," I said, "what time is it?"

"It is after nine."

I half rose to my elbow—subsiding soon, how-

ever, at the quick stab of pain that I felt—for the voice that had stated the time was none other than Mrs. Good's, and the face beneath the cap, when the uniform moved to the foot of the bed, also belonged to Mrs. Good.

"Yes," she said. "It is after nine. You have had quite a night of it but I think you will be all right now."

As I glanced at the chair beside me I began to doubt my senses again. The telephone that had been there was not there. Mrs. Good, who had certainly not been there, was there.

"Where did my telephone go to?" I asked.

"It has not gone."

"It was on this chair last night."

She tiptoed softly out and I heard her asking the doctor over the wire if he could come again soon, and saying that my temperature was still what it should not be and that I called her Dolly and talked of telephones on chairs about the bed.

So I knew enough not to mention the matter till I got a chance to ask the captain. This came one day when she wanted to go home and seemed to think it "delicate" for him to sit with me. Usually one of the Essingtons or that good soul, Mrs. Perry, filled the bill. But this day all of them were busy, so she actually called on him herself.

"You *did* put the telephone here on this chair

by me," I said, "and Bingo *did* bark for me, didn't he? Surely I did not dream that too."

"No. You dreamed enough, but that was real."

"Then, how did it get away?"

"I took it altogether before calling Mrs. Good."

"How did you get her to come to nurse a person she disliked so?" I asked.

"She has been satisfactory?"

"Perfectly. The hatchet has apparently been buried deep. She is too good a nurse to let a prejudice intervene. I did not know she had ever been one."

"I had only noticed her photograph in a uniform. I remembered it that night."

"You didn't tell me how you induced her to come."

"No? Did I not? Did Chow show you the ripe tomato he got this morning?"

"Did he really?"

"Take care," he said, "or your temperature will rise and I shall not be allowed to keep watch again. I'll see if I can find it."

After rummaging in the kitchen, he returned with a tomato, perfect in proportions and a wonderful red."

"Oh *dear,*" I grumbled. "*Why* can't I get up and help to get them in? Are the cucumbers growing, and what about the chickens in the crates? Isn't it all too——"

"Please take it coolly. Everything is as fine

as possible. You sound like the night when you raved so much."

"Did I rave of the garden?"

"Garden and chickens, with, once in a while, hay and geese and a person named Edith mixed in for variety."

"Oh, *heavens,*" I thought. Aloud I said calmly:

"How funny. What did I say of her?"

"I didn't jot it down, and you weren't any too coherent. I simply gathered that she stood in the way of your peace of mind in some way."

"Not so as to bother me in my sane moments," I said. "But I've always disliked the name, somehow."

"How odd. It is one of my favourites, owing to the fact that it belongs to an only sister who is very dear. She married Sir Edward Harboro after I went to India, so I have seen little of her since then. She was at war work in Saloniki when I was discharged, and, as I was asked to assist with recruiting in Canada, I came away without seeing her then. She would admire you tremendously, and I am sure you would like her."

"I am sure of it," I answered. "She would probably redeem the name for me."

Since then the doctor has marvelled at the quick recovery I have made. The next day I made Mrs. Good let me up as far as the davenport, upon which she produced a Mrs. Bidder who could do

the work of the house, and was glad to get back to her tomatoes.

She had been here just a week, for which she asked thirty dollars. I made it thirty-five for good measure, and I am in hopes that the week will have dissolved her hostility to some extent at least. I am anxious to see how we meet as civilians.

I soon began to feel so good that I wanted to gather the vegetables, feed the hens and all that, and Mrs. Bidder earned her pay mostly by reminding me of what the doctor had said. The day I told her that I felt well enough to do without her, Captain Fenton, who heard me say it, calmly contradicted the verdict and ordered her to stay another week.

I thought my raised eyebrows would provoke something from him, but no—he paid not the slightest attention to them. And I—Janet Kirk—have come to be of the opinion that it must be wonderful to have some one to order one's goings and comings.

My mind goes back over the times I have urged you to start right. I still hope you have done so, but I am certain now that the right start is in selecting a man who could, and would, be the head of the house, who might consult one deliciously over small trifles, but who would decide big matters for himself, relieving one of unnecessary responsibility.

Perhaps, when I am strong again and do not have to be careful of a shoulder and collar-bone that a hay-rake ran over, I shall again revel in my independence and long to order my own existence, but I don't a bit right now.

At this point I was interrupted by none other than Mr. Delmar. He entered at my invitation, and, after sitting down sententiously, came right to his point.

"I have come," he said, "to buy your place."

"To *what!*"

"To—ah—make you an offer for this farm."

"But Arcady is not for sale."

"Just a moment. It is not for myself that I speak. I represent almost unlimited American capital." He said this with the utmost reverence. "The fact is that my former chief has written asking me to secure a farm for his son, who has been ordered, for reasons of health, to resort to country life. He requested an artistic place in healthful and beautiful surroundings. Your place here fills the bill, so I have come to open up the deal and I have his authority to close it. At what do you value your property?"

"I value it at twelve thousand dollars, partly, perhaps, because it is, as you say, artistic and beautiful. These things have a money value to me. But it is not for sale."

"Twelve thousand is reasonable," he said. "First, because, as I said, money is no object

to my client; and secondly, because, as you say, artistic surroundings have a money value to the discriminating. Of course, twelve thousand cash does not come into the hands of a young woman every day."

"I said I valued the property at that. I did not say I would sell for that."

"Um-m. The orchard is young, you know. Still, I might make it fifteen thousand if you insist. Buying on commission, you know, I can afford not to be niggardly. Shall we say fifteen thousand?"

"But I am not thinking of selling *at all.*"

At last he began to wonder if it could be that I was not merely bargaining with him. He redoubled his efforts and arguments. Clearly I saw how Eve and Mary had had such difficulty in persuading him of the singleness of their intentions.

Finally, however, he was convinced and his disappointment was touching. In the light of having refused him I did not feel justified in asking him to go to Mr. Good, Mr. Worth and the others who had thought my farming ideas ridiculous, and tell them of his appraisal of the value of Arcady, as I would really have loved to have done.

Not only my hand but my knees also are shaking so this must be farewell for now.

Very much love from

JANET.

Arcady, September the fifth.

DEAR NAN:

Only a few days left until I must needs address you as Madame. I quite expect that, instead of being out on Norvell, enjoying your few days of freedom to go and come as pleases you, you are endeavouring, even into the "wee sma' hours" to have a certain number of pillow cases and luncheon sets embroidered, not to mention the precise number of roses sewed on the exact number of boudoir caps.

I am afraid I should be a terrible outlaw when it came to this business of preparation. "Away with boudoir caps and luncheon sets," I should say. On the level prairie they may be essentials, but here in the divine hills they are anything but. Instead—a sudden notion, a wild ride, a tent in the mountains—perhaps even a cave—that part couldn't matter—but just the music of a mountain stream, the new acquaintance with a chivalry as old as the ages, the wonders of the choicest of Nature's realms mingled with the wonders of the growing knowledge of a mind in tune with one's own, with a philosophy and humour as varying as the tints of the mountains themselves.

There I would say, "Take me to-day,
This is your realm and mine."

Eleanor Essington is going to some city, Calgary or Spokane, to gather her trousseau next week, and they want me to go along. Needless to say, the sentiments to which I have just given vent have not been aired in their presence. Mrs. Essington says I need to be off the place for a time as I cannot refrain from packing when Chow has so much to do.

The early corn is in full swing. We, that is, he, packed ten crates to-day. They run about five dozen to the crate. We also got seven crates of cucumbers. So there is quite a bit of crating, even after things are gathered and sorted.

Mrs. Essington and the girls have volunteered to superintend packing and shipping if only I will superintend Eleanor's selection of clothes. Never before has she been known to take an interest in what she is to wear, and the whole family are anxious that her concession shall be taken advantage of, and that she shall look handsome for this time, even if she is to be a war bride. Their faith that I will be able to accomplish this is inspiring.

So, I think I shall go, if she decides on Calgary. I have a scheme of my own that I want to work out.

And it will be such fun, dressing Eleanor. Blue

I have decided on, about two shades duller than her eyes and with grey squirrel trimming. Chinchilla would be adorable but I wouldn't dare to mention it. A lecture on Red Cross, Victory Bonds and so forth would be certain to follow.

Eleanor has twenty-one hundred dollars that she has made from her bees and the honey. I could scarcely believe her. Needless to say, she has not wasted much on clothes, and she felt sure that one hundred would be ample for garments for her trip and for use here when she settles to the task of running Peter's farm.

I am trying to tell her that we are not on our way to England five years ago, and I shall take along sufficient so as to be able to make loans. The rest I am leaving to the attractions of the shops.

Since my last letter, I have had a visit and request from Mrs. Good. She came one morning and asked if I remembered saying that if a time came when I could be of service to her, I would be glad to repay her for helping me out in my illness.

I remembered.

"Then," she said, "I want you to come out with me to-day and join our War Work Club."

This club handles the Red Cross work that is done here, sending the proceeds in through another society. I have turned in my socks and other work and paid Mrs. Essington a weekly do-

nation for supplies, but have not become a member.

Seeing no reason for refusing and no way of doing so, I consented to go, although I wondered at her sudden desire to have me join. On the way there my curiosity was satisfied. It seems that she is the vice-president of the club, and that the president, Mrs. DeForest, is absent. Mrs. DeForest favours raising war funds by means of raffling and has done so frequently. Mrs. Good frowns on the practice and wished to have a motion passed doing away with it while she was in charge.

And here was I, who have engineered raffles to the extent of three hundred dollars for purposes of war relief, meekly driving out to vote against the Kitchener War Work Club's doing anything of the sort.

Mrs. Good handled the meeting very much as I had seen her handle a patient; expecting, and getting, very little back-talk.

The question of raffling came marching up and after a motion was made that we—I was a member by this time—confine ourselves to other methods of raising funds, discussion was called for. One woman inquired at length how we could be assisting our men at the front by teaching those who remained at home to gamble. Many other reasons, most of which I forget, were advanced for dispensing with the pernicious prac-

tice. Then Mrs. Good asked if there were any final words before the question was put.

"Mrs. Essington," she said, "you, like me, hope to have your boys with you again. Do you not think the country should be kept pure against their home-coming?"

Mrs. Essington rose quietly. There was a stir of expectancy. A woman near me whispered:

"When she talks, she says something."

Here are her words, verbatim.

"Ladies: I am perfectly willing to admit that, in ordinary times, there is nothing to be said in favour of raffling.

"Also, we know that, if, in ordinary times, a man took a gun and went out with the deliberate intention of killing his fellowmen, he would be violating the very fundamental laws of God and man.

"But these are not ordinary times. The safety of small nations, of women and children, of the weak of this and all future generations is at the mercy of a strong nation gone mad. To meet this foe, to protect the weak, our men at arms have been forced by grim and terrible necessity to perform acts that must be quite as odious to them, quite as foreign to their general principles as could be the raffling of a sofa pillow to the members of this club.

"When we think of the way in which our enemies have devastated Belgium, and of how

gladly they would have devastated Canada, yes, and this lovely valley, in the same way, we can indeed be glad that our men were able to lay aside their personal prejudices in favour of a larger patriotism—even if we at home are not big enough to do the same.

"Our means of raising funds are excellent—so far as they go—but if the blessing of God rests on the brave efforts of our men, and who is there that does not believe so, surely it will also rest on fifty dollars or so extra sent once in a while to help alleviate their sufferings.

"When the men who have gone from here to fight for us hear—and hear they will, be very sure of that—that while, in cold and danger they fight our battles with whatever means are available—though no one imagines they approve of the methods—we, at home in comfort and safety, are standing back and with imagined piety are saying that we will help them only with such means as we can approve of, what, we may very well wonder, are they going to think about it?"

When the vote was taken, Mrs. Good did not give the count. She merely said that the majority wished to continue raffling among the means of raising war funds.

The trepidation with which I began the ride home was gradually dispelled by the silence and the September evening peace. It was not until we neared her gate that she asked:

"Did you vote against raffling?"

"No," I said. "I did not."

"Then I wonder who did cast that vote against it. It must have been Caroline Towers. She always was more or less bigoted in her notions."

As I opened the gate for her, she said:

"Be thankful you haven't a man to raise his eyebrows because you have changed your mind."

As she called me up this morning to ask me to come to see a new photograph of Johnny that had just come, I imagine that, through circuitous means, I have finally found a place in her regard. I have always felt that, once this happened, we might get on famously.

There was great excitement in the camp of the Mortimer-Deanes yesterday, when the English mail brought a letter from the aunt.

I think I told you once of a cousin of theirs coming down to enquire about the news of her. It seems that the aunt had asked this cousin to find out their attitude to the news of her illness, which had not been very real, and also to find out why Wilmont did not enlist.

When the cousin, who, by the way, had everything to gain and nothing to lose by sending bad news, reported only concern as to her condition and a seeming indifference to the fortune, as well as mention of going on to Australia, she changed her front at once.

The letter spoke of being lonely and of hoping

they would come home as soon as possible, and enclosed a check for five hundred pounds. Part of this they invested in Victory Bonds and they are using the rest to go into dairying quite extensively, insisting that the cousin join them fifty-fifty in the venture. They have cabled an urgent invitation to the aunt to spend the next year in the mountains of British Columbia. I do hope she accepts, as a character such as she would lend colour to life anywhere.

We are off for Calgary to-morrow.

From your devoted JAN.

Later: Saundy came down to-day and came round to know what could be up. He had noticed, per telescope, unusual activity round the place and wanted it accounted for. When I told him of our plans and whispered to him of my private scheme, he exclaimed,

"Good for you!"

He gave me twenty-five dollars with which to buy something useful for Eleanor, and another twenty-five with which to buy something foolish for himself. He said he had not spent a cent foolishly for at least ten years and that he just naturally had to burst out now. He gave me *carte blanche* in the matter.

I do not know how I shall make out in this odd trust. The only foolish purchase I can remember

having made for myself was a chiffon dress, which would hardly help me any here.

Something useful for Eleanor will be a much easier matter.

Y. T.

J.

Calgary, September tenth.

DEAR MADAME it is:

I have just sent off a wire which you will doubtless get before you leave on your journey, and I must snatch a few moments from the whirl of shopping here to tell you that I have shipped my wedding present to your hotel in the city.

It is an Oriental rug, a Princess Bokhara, to be used as the cover for your living-room table. I am sending it to you there so that you can tuck it under your arm when you go shopping and buy everything to match some one of its wonderful shades. Just let me know if this does not put Mrs. Senior out of conceit with her chintzes.

Congratulations *re* the election. M. P.'s majority was a source of satisfaction to me that I would never have believed possible, considering how much in the wrong I know him to have been at all other elections. Such are party politics.

Eleanor and I are having the time of our lives. Instead of urging Eleanor to buy, I—even I—am preaching economy to her. I am talking Red Cross and Victory Bonds—to unheeding ears.

There was a dream of a beaded blouse, such a shade of blue but such a price! I attempted to draw her away but no: "That was made for my suit," she said and counted out the money.

"That would go a long way in the Red Cross," I murmured.

"Go find one somewhere and give them this," she said, counting out another eighteen dollars.

"And there are Victory Bonds," I said severely.

"If I am to send my husband," she said, blushing like a rose, "you can buy the Victory Bonds."

We got a very satisfactory blue suit with grey fur collar and a hat that harmonises. The blue blouse truly was made to go with these. This and a smart and serviceable blue serge frock and a handsome green driving coat and toque were the main purchases. She spent a great deal of time in the lingerie section, but would have none of the adorable pink silk that was everywhere. I felt so sorry to see it slighted that I bought quite a lot of it myself.

A motor coat and a driving hat of suède were my only other purchases. Then, while I left Eleanor to the handkerchief and glove finishing touches, I slipped out and bought my car.

Yes. Just like that.

I saw it first on the street with a "Demonstration" card on it and I followed it home. Not because it ran beautifully or otherwise—although it does; not because I knew its engines or its merits, but because, if you please, of its beautiful shade of brown—body, wheels, upholstering, carpets and all—just the shade of my eyes. A rea-

she said, "but, having asthma, he cannot play them."

"Well, then," I said, "you decide. I have bought three wedding presents in this place and I don't pretend to have a single idea left."

"I have it," she cried. "The very thing. Did you notice that gramophone in the window of a curiosity shop or whatever it is you call one?"

"A second hand store?"

"Yes. It was marked at twenty-four dollars. It was in a box, you know,—didn't have a horn. Saundy will not worry that it is not a cabinet grand."

We fairly flew to the shop and in the shortest possible time the machine and eight records were ours. I am sure we might as well as not have had a dozen records but for our haste to close the bargain. Then we each added a bit and cleared a dealer or two of their Scotch selections. We sent all this along to Golden too and will take it home in the car.

If the engine stalls on a mountain-side road or a tire blows out we shall cheer each other as we wait for assistance with "The Keel Row" or "Ye Banks and Braes."

Eleanor joins me in wishing you a life of happiness and prosperity.

Ever your friend,

JANET K.

Arcady, September fourteenth.

DEAR NAN:

Home again. How dear the guardian poplars, the lazy brook, my little home and all seemed as we came between the stone gateposts. The chickens scratching industriously at their supper and Chow, nailing crates in the shed, seemed to say that all was running well.

The trip home has been most wonderful. If you and M. P. want a real honeymoon, drive from Golden to Cranbrook through the enchanted Windermere Valley—two hundred miles of roads such as you never even dreamed of and a moving panorama of landscapes that one could never forget.

I was anxious to take a day at Banff, but as Peter and Eleanor are going there together, she would not. She did not want to see a thing first, and looked out of the opposite window as we passed.

We left Golden in the early morning. The sun rose above the gorgeous hills, battling with and finally vanquishing a fragrant September ground mist. The air was intoxicating and the car in a singularly good humour. It took the hills as

she said, "but, having asthma, he cannot play them."

"Well, then," I said, "you decide. I have bought three wedding presents in this place and I don't pretend to have a single idea left."

"I have it," she cried. "The very thing. Did you notice that gramophone in the window of a curiosity shop or whatever it is you call one?"

"A second hand store?"

"Yes. It was marked at twenty-four dollars. It was in a box, you know,—didn't have a horn. Saundy will not worry that it is not a cabinet grand."

We fairly flew to the shop and in the shortest possible time the machine and eight records were ours. I am sure we might as well as not have had a dozen records but for our haste to close the bargain. Then we each added a bit and cleared a dealer or two of their Scotch selections. We sent all this along to Golden too and will take it home in the car.

If the engine stalls on a mountain-side road or a tire blows out we shall cheer each other as we wait for assistance with "The Keel Row" or "Ye Banks and Braes."

Eleanor joins me in wishing you a life of happiness and prosperity.

Ever your friend,

JANET K.

Arcady, September fourteenth.

Dear Nan:

Home again. How dear the guardian poplars, the lazy brook, my little home and all seemed as we came between the stone gateposts. The chickens scratching industriously at their supper and Chow, nailing crates in the shed, seemed to say that all was running well.

The trip home has been most wonderful. If you and M. P. want a real honeymoon, drive from Golden to Cranbrook through the enchanted Windermere Valley—two hundred miles of roads such as you never even dreamed of and a moving panorama of landscapes that one could never forget.

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We left Golden in the early morning. The sun rose above the gorgeous hills, battling with and finally vanquishing a fragrant September ground mist. The air was intoxicating and the car in a singularly good humour. It took the hills as

though it had no idea that we were tackling a twelve per cent grade.

We reached Invermere, the half-way stopping place, that evening, our only mishap having been a minor puncture. We jacked up the machine and put on the spare tire ourselves, so did not find it necessary to resort to "Ye Banks and Braes." As our heads seemed still to swing with the constant windings of the long drive, we decided to take a day in which to rest.

We began our "rest" early with a game of golf on the links above the lake. These are at the disposal of the guests of the summer hotel, as are the tennis courts and boats. Below us, beautiful Lake Windermere was peaceful and iridescent in the morning light.

After this, accompanied by two charming women whose acquaintance we had just made, we made the run to the Sinclair Hot Springs, twelve miles into the mountains on the new Banff-Windermere road, which will be, when completed, one of the costliest and most wonderful roads in the world.

We had a dip in the pool of the radium hot-springs. The water is of a queer, greenish hue that makes one look like the figures of the rising dead in Lord Leighton's masterpiece in the Tate Gallery. I revelled in the heat of the water, and, as I swam about and watched the others climb out to wait for the "weak feeling" to pass off, I felt

compensated for the many times I have had to sit on a bank, shivering as I tested with my toes cold water that other people seemed able to enjoy.

The luncheon that we ate would have been a credit to a wood-chopper. After this, to sort of balance our trip into the Rockies where the hot-springs are, we drove up into the Selkirks to the west of the lake,—up and up around the winding hillsides, with Toby Creek running, like a silver ribbon, hundreds of yards below, till we reached Paradise Mine—the highest point to be reached by motor in Canada.

Truly this is a land of superlatives. It seemed in keeping with the grandeur all about that the horses that haul the ore to where it is loaded on to tractors for the rest of the journey down were as big as elephants.

The Chinese cook came out and inquired, "Take some tea?" to willing ears.

The next morning we were on our way again. At the top of Thunder Hill we paused to wonder at the gorgeous view that was spread below: the placid silver lake—from which the hills rose straight, sending their peaks far up into the fleecy clouds.

"Oh, dear," I exclaimed. "If only I had my sketch book here."

"Janet," said Eleanor, patiently. "That is eighteen times you have said that since I began

counting. If it were not for the variety of the scenery, the monotony of your remarks——"

"Nevertheless," I said, "I am coming here sometime with plenty of colours and several blocks, and I am going to sketch and sketch and sketch. I am warning you and if you fear the monotony of it you need not come."

"You had best bring Clay," she said. "He would make a duet of your raptures and he sketches rather well, you know."

"I shall think about it," I said, letting her think her idea perfectly original.

We passed the spot where those waters that are to be the mighty chain of Columbia rivers and lakes have their source and start northward. A few yards further along, turning southward, is the beginning of the mighty chain of rivers and lakes that is the Kootenay. At various points on our southward way we caught further glimpses of the Kootenay, grown bigger each time. Its greenish waters made us think of the Reclamation Farm, the hay-fields and home.

And now we are home. The Essingtons have all been over to admire the car and profess to be delighted with Eleanor's clothes. While they were here, we set Saundy's music box before the telephone, got his attention and played him "Scots Wha Hae." He was beside himself with delight at our purchase and intends taking it up

to the station even though he has only two weeks more to put in there.

Johnny Good is home for a few days' furlough before going overseas. He looks very fit and soldierly. He came with his mother and Rose to see my new purchase. I am to take them driving to-morrow. Rose and Johnny are walking up and down the Goods' drive arm and arm this minute. So that is settled. Johnny is no match for the cleverness of Rose, but he will be happy, which is the main thing.

After the others had gone, Captain Fenton came, welcomed me home and admired the car, but all very gravely.

"You don't really like it?" I asked, surprised.

"Like it! Why, it's a beauty."

"You didn't look enthusiastic."

"You have heard of sour grapes."

"Yes. But not *you*."

"And why not me?"

"You couldn't be so small. Besides, you could have one if you wanted it."

"Perhaps. But I couldn't drive it if I had it."

"Oh! Why is it that you keep reminding me of something that I would otherwise never think of?"

"You are mistaken. It is you who remind me of it. Not with intent of course, but— I must go now. Some day you must take me for a spin.

I will redeem myself by praising your car extravagantly."

So I am alone with a restless feeling of dissatisfaction with my home-coming.

This is, possibly, because those steel grey eyes, that had said so many exquisite things when I was ill, are now only grave and preoccupied.

However.

I shall probably recover and die of something else.

If not, then ever yours,

JAN.

Arcady, September twenty-first.

Dear Nan:

As you mentioned expecting to be again in Fort Weyne by this time, I am sending you a crate of my tomatoes to show you what can be grown in the Kootenay Valley. I cannot tell you how proud I am of this part of my garden crop. The corn has been good, also the different varieties of cucumbers, but the tomatoes are *par excellence*, both as to colour and size and shape. I sent some to the Spokane fair and anxiously await the verdict.

They are just about over for this year and we are getting in the last of the cucumbers and picklers. Cabbages, carrots, turnips and beets come next. My second crop of cauliflower is much better than the first, a huge success, in fact.

I have my garden all planned for next year. This year there were ninety crates of tomatoes. Next year, as the soil shows such partiality for them, I hope to have five times as many. I shall have a special paper label for my crates and expect to take a trip through the prairie cities making known the virtues of Arcady's products.

Asparagus, strawberries, raspberries and anything that is of finest quality will be sold under

the same name and label. It will probably be necessary for me to allow my neighbours to use the name of Arcady for their best products, for only so shall I be able to fill the droves of orders that I shall receive. Some imagination, did I hear you say? Never mind. You may some day find my garden truck as famous as Sunkist oranges.

Mrs. Essington has just gotten word that Jack, her second son, is wounded and missing. The two boys have been round about the front lines over there for so long that the family had sort of given up looking for the envelope marked O.H.M.S. and franked from the militia department. It came when Mrs. Essington was spending the afternoon at a neighbour's.

I was there helping to pack Eleanor's things. Not that I was needed among them all, but they wanted me there so that none of them would feel "in the dumps" as Betty put it, about parting with the effects of the reliable member of the family. It was a very jolly party into which a neighbour's boy brought the wire.

At once their whole thought was for the mother.

"We must phone at once," Eleanor said. "She would not want to be left a moment after this came."

"Phone for Clay first," Cynthia cried. "I want him here when she comes."

He said he would be over at once.

Their relief was great when I said that I would

phone the mother. I tried to keep my tones natural when I said that the girls would like her to come home, but I believe she read it in my voice.

"I will come," was all she said.

The captain went to meet her, down the walk between the rose bushes.

"Which one is it?" she asked him quickly.

"It's Jack."

"He's killed?"

"Wounded—and missing."

"Not a prisoner?"

"We cannot know that till particulars arrive."

She turned on the porch and seemed to be looking away across, right to the fields of Flanders.

"Wounded," she said at last, with broken quietness. "My son. And I cannot go to him. I cannot know. They may not have found him. He may be cold, or a prisoner. And he wants his mother. Oh, girls—your brother!"

"Don't, mother dear," said Eleanor. "Jack may be all right. His wound may be slight. He is probably not blind, like Arthur Wills."

"Arthur Wills is at least cared for," the mother said. "But my boy is—missing."

"A wire came to-day for Mrs. Halling. Her boy was killed in the same battle," the captain told her.

"I congratulate her. He is at rest."

Then she fell into a silence that was more heart-

rending than her words had been. When Cynthia saw me slip on my coat and take quiet leave she came along.

"I can't make it any harder for Mother," she said, with a sort of grimness, "so I am coming down to your house to cry my heart out. Jack was my twin, you know. If he has gone, the bottom has dropped from everything. Oh, if Mother and I could only go to him! Fighting in a trench is an easy thing compared with this. I am so glad Clay is there. He has the sort of strength she needs."

The whole valley seems to feel the same thing. Two or three times he has been asked to break news of the last casualty lists, which have been long. The tensity in the valley has been such that no one was amused that little Mrs. Allenby, whose husband went with the Fifty-fourth, went into hysterics when she saw him turn in at her gate, although he only wanted to ask her to accompany a duet at a musicale.

Do you remember our visit in Vancouver the September after war broke out, how our confidence in the guns at Point Gray and the Inlet made us feel so secure that the Germans could not hurt us, how the picturesque Kiltie squads, as they swung round the curves of Stanley Park Drive to the skirl of the bag-pipes, thrilled and exalted us?

And we thought that that was war!

Later, the first contingent left Fort Weyne. The eyes of the men were bright. They were on a great adventure. They feared that the war would be over before they could finish their training, and that they would return un-covered with glory. When they had gone, how empty the place seemed! Several of the finest boys had gone—the best tennis player—a number of our dancing partners. We were lonely.

And we thought that that was war!

But now we know that thrilling music and cheering crowds do not spell battle. It is the mother who looks away across and wonders of her son; the wife who knows that her mate will never again watch the cunning tricks of the baby boy so like him; the thousands of children who will never know "daddy" except by his picture in uniform; the tens of thousands of girls whose home-makers, who did not want to die, are dead—these, we now know, are what is meant by the grim and terrible word that thrilled us once.

As I cannot get Mrs. Essington's eyes from my mind, I will close for the present.

JANET.

Later:

As I did not get this posted, I will add to it.

Mrs. Essington has received further word that Jack is in a base hospital seriously wounded. He was found beside a shell hole almost covered with earth. While still anxious about him, she is tremendously relieved to know where he is.

Cynthia has at last gotten permission to go overseas in the V. A. D. and is beside herself with joy. Her one thought is to get to see Jack.

With the reception of this better news, Eleanor decided to be married on the date she had first planned. The four weeks that remain before Peter's departure will be little enough for him to remember over there, she said.

A car from town and mine conveyed the family to the church and afterwards to the train. There was no rice or frivolity but the happiness that shone in the faces of the newly wedded pair buoyed up the others until the train had carried them away.

We drove home in the empty and rather melancholy atmosphere that follows the departure of a bride and groom. I did not expect the Essingtons to feel very jovial, but the captain, who should have helped things along, was the most morose of all.

I suggested a run down the Idaho road, glorious in the yellows of autumn, but Mrs. Essington asked me to take them home instead. After I had dropped them, I still had Captain Fenton in the car.

"What are you going to do now?" I asked.

"I don't know yet," he said. "But it has got to be something and that very soon."

At his tone I refrained from again suggesting the Idaho road.

"Do tell me what is wrong," I said as I stopped at his gate. "We were good friends. Are we not now?"

"No. We're not. That is—yes, of course. I'll say good-bye now. No, no tea, thanks. It's this confounded wedding, I guess. Something like my raptures over your car. Sour grapes."

"But again——"

"Good-bye, Janet."

Slowly I drove into the gate of Arcady, wondering at the tone of finality in his words. This kept coming into my thoughts during the next day or two, so that I was tremendously relieved to hear the A-A signal on the second evening. It was my first summons over this wire since my trip.

"Are you alone?" he asked.

"Yes."

"May I come for a few moments?"

I utilised the interval in donning something to accord with my plans—an azure blue affair that

I had not yet worn here. Once he had mentioned particular partiality to blue on women.

Just as I finished, he stood at my door—*in his uniform.*

While I stared at his unexpected appearance in army clothes—and he is gorgeous in them, Nan—he stared at my azure frock.

Then he asked, almost roughly:

"Why do you wear that?"

"Because you told me once that you were fond of blue. Why do *you* wear *that?*"

"I am going away. I came to tell you."

"Back to the army?"

"No; to California. I am being sent to inspect the completing of a big machine gun order in San Francisco."

Did I ever tell you that he has invented several improvements in the British machine guns, and from that source derives a good income?

"When are you leaving?" I asked.

"To-morrow—the next day at latest. As soon as Saundy and I can get things arranged."

I dropped onto the davenport facing the fire, and, with a diffidence quite foreign to his usual ease, he followed suit.

"I *am* sorry," I said. "Fancy this valley with you away."

"That is good of you," he said. "I missed a neighbour terribly myself, quite recently. But, of course, the two cases cannot be the same."

"Why not?"

"Because they're not."

"Why are they not?"

"Because they—you don't——"

"I do not what? How do you know?"

He wheeled and gave me a startled look.

"Do you?"

"You shouldn't force my hand, you know," I said, "when you're not willing to show your own."

And then I waited. I knew, in that wonderful moment, that all his love was mine; it was in the air, surrounding me. For a moment I had the most exquisite feeling that his arms must steal around me. Then—he rose and leaned on the mantel, staring deep into the fire, his arms folded tight.

I waited on in a paralysing tenseness—I do not know how long. Then, almost without disturbing the silence, the door opened and closed again and I was alone.

I buried my face in that beautiful shirred satin puff you gave me and cried myself to sleep. I was still there, cold and aching, when morning came. I longed to cover myself with my motor rug and repeat the performance—would have done so but for Bingo, who objected almost frantically to my attitude of woe.

The concern in his homely face seemed to say:

"Cheer up. The world may be a dismal place and the years endless, but there is no use in getting indigestion, even over that."

However, this is from a very dismal

JANET.

Arcady, September twenty-fifth.

DEAR NAN:

Did I pass on Bingo's statement that the world is a dismal place and that the years are endless? Well. Doubtless no harm has been done, for *you* know that the world is not dismal, and you hope the years *are* endless.

The morning after Captain Fenton was here I saw Saundy go to Albemarle, presumably to assist in making the place ready to leave. He proceeded out about the barn and, later, I saw him lead Midnight out and over to my stable. I again had recourse to the shirred satin puff. My heart lightened a little that he did not leave for the train that day.

Next morning, early, Saundy was there again. Mortimer-Deane was with him this time. I wondered at this and wanted to phone, but I had said that last word and I felt that the next, if there was to be any, must come from him.

But when, the next morning, the doctor came with Mortimer-Deane, I was beside myself with the delay of the few minutes till they had gone. I had called on our wire almost before they were at the gate. I hardly knew the voice that answered me.

"Something is the matter," I said. "Are you ill? What is it?"

"Please do not be alarmed," he said. "I—well, I walked about all the night after I left you, and it seems not to have been good for me."

"You walked about—all night!"

"Yes. Your shade was not drawn and I could see you there. I thought I would go mad. I wanted to rush back in to you. I almost did so—a dozen times. But I won out—which is well. When German gas has left a man so that he cannot stand a mental battle on a misty night without the attending results of quinsy and rheumatism, there is nothing but a thorough retreat for him. You can see that."

I had been thinking very fast indeed, while he talked.

"Then you cannot go for a day or so?" I asked.

"I hope to get away Thursday. That gives me four days yet. I should be around by that time."

"Will you come in the evening before you leave?" I asked. "There is something you can do for me in California."

"But certainly. I shall be most happy to do anything possible for you. But, as for coming over—my behaviour last time——"

"Never mind that. I have forgotten it. Can I do anything for you now?"

"Thanks, no. Morty is coming again. He is a capital nurse."

In the days that have gone since then I have been busy. There was a slight frost over by the river, so, as it usually goes there first as a warning, we began to get the remainder of the garden under cover. Chow got two other Chinamen and they got in the potatoes and other vegetables.

Yesterday I crated and sent off the remaining four dozen chickens that were for sale. This leaves me with five dozen choice ones for my flock. Last night I made up the books on my chickens, and when they were balanced, I found that I had fifty-eight dollars and my sixty pullets to show for my summer's work. If the original cost had not been so great—but it was. If I had not lost so many, and food had not been so expensive—but I did and it was. However, I have gained useful experience, and next year shall grow my own chicks and make quite a fortune.

Betsy is almost dry, so Saundy is to take her back to the Arrow with the others. Her cream and cream money, abetted by the garden, is all that has kept me alive this summer. So that I have really boarded for the original outlay of seventy dollars—and I have secured a cow for nothing. Yes, I remember that my book-keeping always amused you.

I sold my pigs to the butcher at a profit of twenty-four dollars and seventy cents. Molly and Dexter are rented to Mr. Good at three dollars a day for the rest of the season, for Govern-

ment road work. They, too, have been a good investment, and I have their winter hay put up.

As to my garden, I should like to say that the truck sales had more than paid Chow's wages, but as it was only fifteen dollars over, I gave that to him for special efficiency and for the purpose of having a sort of lien on him for the next season. Next year I shall not need him so early, but I mean to garden more strenuously than ever then. By all accounts the necessity for production will be ever so much more urgent then than now. I hope you are planning to fill every inch of your place with wheat and more wheat.

And when you ask what the special profit of my venture has been I will refer you to the visit of Mr. Delmar who cheerfully placed Arcady's value at five thousand above the actual cash outlay in getting it to where it was then. I think his estimate was quite moderate, too.

And after five years—well, the Perrys will easily make three thousand off an eighty acre orchard, not to mention any of their side lines. So, you see, I am on my way.

Both to-day and yesterday I saw Captain Fenton going to Mortimer-Deane's for dinner, so I knew that he was improving. Just as I was writing this he called on the phone to say that he leaves to-morrow and will be over soon to get his commission. Saundy, who was here when the message came, has just gone, not seeming to feel it

his duty to stay and chaperone us. He and I have a secret—the dear, trustworthy old soul.

Later:

He came. The stage was set as before, in colours of azure blue. After only a few sentences he asked what it was that he might do for me in California.

"I will not trouble you about it," I said, as I arranged myself comfortably on the davenport—an act which he did not copy—"because I can do it myself. I am going to California too."

"You are going to California," he repeated, like an automaton. "When?"

"To-morrow. It is to-morrow we go, is it not?"

"But— Why, Janet, that is impossible. Your neighbours' opinions may have changed about you once, but they could easily change again. Besides——"

"I am going to California with you to-morrow, as your wife," I stated distinctly, as I rose and stood with him by the fire.

"Janet, don't joke. I can not stand it."

"I'm not joking. Claymore, look at me. You know I'm not. If you go away and leave me, I'll die. I'll——"

I got no further, for I was seized hungrily, and with his strong arms far about me I knew that I had done exactly and precisely right. Then he

sat me on the davenport and sat there with me, staring moodily into the fire for many seconds.

"What is it now?" I asked patiently, at last.

"I am just getting my senses again," he said. "Janet, I can't do this."

"Do what?"

"Let you make this sacrifice. It is wonderful of you, but I must not let you."

"Personally, I cannot see how you are going to escape," I laughed. "But if you know of any just and sufficient reason why these two——"

"It's my knee, of course. And my general state as exhibited this last week."

"Then you need——"

"Listen, Janet, till I've finished. I don't know what you will think of me, but I've got to be honest. I am not at all sure— Suppose that you were ten years my senior—that you were maimed—rheumatic, perhaps, and all that. I am not all sure that I would be the wonderful soul that you are. I want you now with every breath I draw, but then I might not want——"

"Nonsense," I laughed, relieved. "I don't in the least care whether you would or not. A woman is different."

"Is she?" he asked, with an eager longing to catch at a straw. "I wish I could be sure."

"Claymore," I said. "There are three words I would like to hear you say. Anything more that I have to say comes after that."

He said them; over and over—in my ear—on my lips——

"Is that enough, or shall I repeat——"

"No. Wait a minute. Saundy has a license and has arranged for everything to be ready in the church to-morrow at ten. I will wear your seal ring till we get to Spokane. We can pick the others together there."

So it is settled that way, Nan dearest. We are going to drive to California in my brown car, leaving at ten to-morrow. Won't it be heaven? The drive through the Walla Walla and Cœur d'Alene in October days! A gypsy jaunt right down into the perpetual summer of the lower coast, where we shall be waiting for you and Montague.

I must pack suitable clothes for my trip. Will finish this the very last minute before I go.

The last morning of Janet Kirk.

This sounds like an obituary, but it isn't. Not a bit of it.

We are all packed. A camping outfit, double de luxe, fills the tonneau of the car. It fills me with joy that Captain Fenton—I mean Claymore—has never once objected that I am to furnish and drive the car for our honeymoon. That should augur well for our future together.

Early this morning came Nicky, very dressed up and business-like. He inquired with dignity

for Captain Fenton. I directed him to the car in the rear.

"Captain Fenton," I heard him say. "Has Miss Kirk any flowers?"

"You mean a bridal bouquet, Nicky?"

"Um-hum."

"Yes, Nicky. She made a special request for the big shaggy asters in my yard, so that we need not leave them all alone. Why?"

"Because. My mother has a bush covered with the loveliest white roses, and she says I can and I want to give them to Miss Kirk."

"Well, Nicky," Claymore answered, "it is usually a man's privilege to furnish flowers for his bride, but it shows how much I think of you that I let you do it this time."

Nicky left in highest glee and in the shortest possible time was back with a fragrant bunch of sweet, white roses and maidenhair fern, tied with white satin ribbon.

Then Saundy came, with a large blue envelope that contained, he said, his wedding gift. Claymore slipped his arm around me as I wonderingly drew out a folded document.

It was a deed of the MacPhaill Mines, willed over, on the death of Saundy MacPhaill, to Claymore Fenton to be held in trust for Saundy Fenton and his heirs.

The import of this did not reach me for some moments. When it did, the fact that Claymore

took the old man's hand, looked into his eyes and thanked him from the bottom of his heart without a blush, put him at once among the super-men in my adoring regard.

And now I think that we may go. The Essingtons, Mortimer-Deanes, Worths, Perrys and Goods all drove toward the little church some time ago, but I do not want to pass their horses on the way.

Saundy and Nicky are to be our special bodyguard, just as they are to be the guardians of Arcady and Albemarle while we are absent. They are calling me, so I must go.

Good-bye, Nan dearest.

I know that I can leave it to your sweet disposition never to recall the rage of a certain young woman at the fears, attributed to a neighbour, that a bachelor in her vicinity was in danger.

J.

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McKowan, Evah May (Cartwright)
Janet of Kootenay

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